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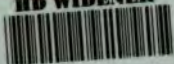
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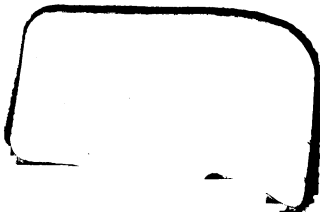
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THE  
PLENARY INSPIRATION

OF THE  
HOLY SCRIPTURES.

BY ELEAZAR LORD.

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TO

THE REV. JOHN C. BRIGHAM, D.D.,

*Senior Secretary of the American Bible Society:*

MY DEAR FRIEND:

I inscribe this volume to you, not merely as a token of personal esteem, but also as an expression of the regard which I entertain for your services in the official station which, during five-and-thirty years, you have occupied, in devising and maturing the measures, and extending and guiding the operations of the National Society for publishing and disseminating, throughout this and in foreign lands, the great charter of faith and life—the Holy Word of God.

It is now about twenty years since, on removing from the city to this place, I ceased to act as one of the Publishing Committee of that noble Institution. Its progress in the interim—the enlargement of its operations, its matured and conservative character, its hold on the confidence of the country and the world, its relations to the well-being, to the education, the principles, the thoughts, the words, and to the faith, the conduct, and the immortal hopes of millions of the past and the passing generation—how intimately has your position connected you with all this! And what a significance of purpose, of tendencies, and of results, must a life so occupied have to one whose intellectual and moral convictions, faith and consciousness, unite in the irrefragable certainty that the Holy Scriptures are, “in truth, the Word of God.”

I would not, even by implication, commit you to any errors or defects in the ensuing pages. It suffices me to know that you hold the plenary Divine inspiration of the Bible as a foundation principle, both of all effective and saving faith in its contents, and of all true Christian

efforts to disseminate it, as well as of the obligation of every one who has that sacred Book, to aid in furnishing it to others, and of their obligation to study and obey it. This foundation principle is, however, assailed by imposing and specious objections. How, it is asked, can the Scriptures, written, as they are, in the language, styles, and idioms of men, be properly declared to be the infallible Word of God? If I have done any thing towards a satisfactory solution of this chief difficulty, I shall not doubt of your agreeing with me in the main positions which I have advanced, as well as in the cardinal doctrine which I endeavor to defend, whether my auxiliary reasonings and illustrations do, or do not, in all respects meet your approbation. .

Wishing you yet many years of uninterrupted service in your wanted and genial post,

I am faithfully yours,

E. LORD.

PIERMONT, ROCKLAND Co., N. Y.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE views which are exhibited in the ensuing pages, concerning the nature and effect of Inspiration, differ widely from the theories which have hitherto prevailed. It is shown, or at least attempted to be shown, from the sacred oracles, and from the constitution, experience and consciousness of man, that language is exclusively the medium and instrument of thought; that the conveyance of thoughts from one mind to another necessarily includes a vocal utterance, or a transfer, by inspiration or otherwise, of the words which express them; that inspiration is affirmed, not of the sacred writers personally, but of what they wrote; that we think in words, receive the thoughts of others in their words, intellectually conceive thoughts, are conscious of them, remember them, and express them, only in words and signs equivalent to vocal articulations; and that words intelligibly and legitimately used, necessarily and perfectly signify and express the thoughts conceived in them: and it is therefore argued, that the inspiration of the Divine thoughts into the minds of the sacred writers necessarily comprised the inspiration of the words by which they were rendered intelligently conscious of the thoughts conveyed, and which they wrote as they received them; that on this ground, that which they wrote is in fact, and is therefore expressly denominated the Word of God; and that what they wrote was inspired in the language of common life, and in the style and idioms of the respective writers, to the end that they and their unlearned readers might correctly understand it; and that, when translated into the like phraseology of different nations, it might be level to the capacity and within the comprehension of the common people.

PIERMONT, *September*, 1856.





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## CHAPTER I.

### THE STATE OF THE QUESTION.

No question concerning Revealed Religion is of higher importance in itself, or in its bearings at the present time, than that which immediately respects the plenary Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. What is the nature of that Inspiration by which the Divine thoughts are so conveyed to man and so expressed in human language, that the words of the sacred Text are the words of God? This is the question. The solution of it requires, as well with respect to any one as to any other portion of what is contained in the Inspired volume, such an exposition of the nature and effects of the Inspiration, as shall perfectly reconcile the fact, that the words as inscribed by the sacred penmen, are the words of God, with the fact, that the writing consists of the ordinary language in the peculiar style and idioms of the respective writers.

That faith in the Divine Inspiration, authority, and infallibility of the Holy Scriptures, which is connected with eternal life, has, from age to age, been uniformly held, by the heirs of salvation; and would have been in like manner, and as firmly held, had the nature and

mode of Inspiration never been subjected to any theological or philosophical disquisition. Of that faith the Scriptures themselves supply those grounds and evidences which Divinely enlightened minds and regenerated hearts perceive and embrace, with intuitive and perfect conviction. Discussions of the subject, therefore, have had reference chiefly to another class—to skeptics, or to those having but an unsettled, historical or speculative belief—to present to their view such rational considerations, and such historical, or other evidences, as might obviate objections, and induce conviction, that the Scriptures were inspired. To that class who are supposed, generally, at least, to admit that the Scriptures contain many facts and doctrines which man could not discover, and which, therefore, must have been revealed, and, if revealed, must have been inspired, it has been deemed to be of great importance to show what is the nature, mode, and extent of that Inspiration which is affirmed of the sacred oracles. This question naturally presented itself in connection with the fact, that the Scriptures were written at different periods of time, by men of different countries, and of various degrees of education and intelligence, and written in the peculiar styles of the different writers. Moreover, in the discussion of the subject, it has been taken for granted, that it was the writers personally, instead of that which they wrote, which was alleged to be inspired. Hence, as their writings contained some things which were level to their capacity, and within their previous knowledge, and other things which were previously unknown and above their capacity, different kinds and degrees of Inspiration have been

imagined, as being most likely to account for the various contents and styles of the sacred Text.

Thus, an inspiration of *superintendency* has been supposed, whereby the minds of the writers were preserved from error in recording what was familiarly known to them, or within the scope of their natural faculties. Next an inspiration of *elevation*, by which the natural faculties were excited and invigorated; and then an inspiration of *suggestion*, whereby they were enabled to conceive of things which were previously unknown, and undiscoverable. To these, indeed, some add an inspiration of *direction*; but they do not treat of it as differing essentially from superintendence. See Horne, Doddridge, Pye Smith, Dick, Daniel Wilson, Henderson, Michaelis, Grotius, and a host of others besides the Rabbinical doctors.

It is not necessary at present, to take any further notice of these fancied distinctions, than to observe, that they have not been shown to have any foundation in the Scriptures themselves; which on the contrary, indicate but one kind and degree of inspiration; and that they create, but do not remove any real or supposed difficulties. The distinction made by some, between Inspiration and Revelation, is irrelevant and nugatory; since, had any thing been revealed which was not also inspired, who could determine what was inspired, and what not? If the whole was inspired, how can it elucidate the nature or mode of inspiration to treat of some portions of the matter as supernaturally revealed, and of other portions as within the previous knowledge of the writers? But so far as we know, or can infer from the Scriptures themselves,

every distinct Revelation was expressed in words ; and all the words of Scripture were inspired into the minds of the writers.

In general, and especially wherever rationalistic criticism and philosophical idealism and pantheism are dominant, the utmost vagueness of language, confusion of thought, and inconsistency of doctrine, are exhibited concerning the nature, reality, extent, and results of Inspiration. Those generally who have discussed the subject, seem to have directed their attention to the objections which they felt called upon to meet, or to the preconceived theories which they desired to support, rather than to the nature and the inherent and necessary demands and implications of the subject itself.

Such, then, briefly, is the state of the question, as exhibited in the principal publications relating to it, both in this and other countries. Some, indeed, as Gausen, Haldane, and Carson, maintain the *plenary* inspiration, and consequent binding authority of the entire volume of canonical Scriptures, on the ground of their own testimony, that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God;" but they do not so discuss the nature and mode of inspiration as satisfactorily to obviate the distinctions above referred to. There is, therefore, occasion for a further elucidation of the subject. It needs to be shown that the nature and mode of inspiration were such as to preclude variety of kinds and degrees, and establish the conclusion that every portion of the original text was alike inspired, and is, therefore, with strict propriety, denominated the Word of God, and the infallible and only rule of faith and life.

## CHAPTER II.

## PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

WITH the inspired volume of Scripture in our hands, we are in a condition to judge what was necessary in the case of a Divine Revelation, by what has actually been communicated. Were we without a knowledge of that volume, we should be utterly incapable of conceiving, as the wisest of the heathen from age to age have shown themselves to be, of any one of its essential truths concerning the perfections and government of the Creator, the invisible world, the moral relations and duties of man, his condition as a sinner, the method of salvation, or the retributions of eternity; and equally incompetent to discover the way in which such truths might be revealed. But with the Scriptures in our possession, we are made aware of the vehicle of Revelation—human language, the ordinary fixed and permanent language of common life; and of the instruments employed in communicating the divine thoughts in that language—holy men selected and qualified for the purpose. With these two preliminaries we are also made aware of what the Divine Wisdom deemed it proper to include in the volume which was to be the infal-



lible rule of faith and life—a point which none but the Omniscient Being could possibly determine. And we find the contents as varied as the phenomena of human experience are on the one hand, and as the superhuman existences, facts, and relations of the invisible world are on the other. To the extent perhaps of two thirds of the entire contents of the volume, the original text consists of words which had been audibly spoken by the Revealer to the writers. Intimately collocated and intermingled with these are passages of several distinct classes: 1. Passages consisting of words which are declared to have been spoken by good men, by angels, by bad men, and by Satan. With respect to these, whether truthful and correct in sentiment or otherwise, it is the fact only of their having been spoken, that is authenticated by their insertion in the sacred books. 2. Historical and biographical narratives, in which actual events, acts, and sayings, whether good or bad, are recorded, and thereby the reality of their occurrence is certified. 3. Whatever of poetry or prose was inspired without the previous or coincident occurrence of vocal utterance.

These varied contents conclusively manifest what it was necessary to include in a revelation from God to man, and *in what relations* the facts and doctrines of Scripture should be communicated to him; while the vehicle employed, the language of his ordinary life, implies that his constitution, mental and physical, was perfectly adapted to that mode of receiving divine instruction. With these considerations, and the facts and doctrines of the actual revelation in view, we may safely assert, as what with the same knowledge would

be felt prior to an actual revelation, and as preliminary to an inquiry into the nature and mode of inspiration :

1. That a revelation of the mind and will of God was a natural and first necessity to man.

2. That the requisite matter of revelation, comprising supernatural truths in *their due relations* to the facts of human experience and consciousness, faith and life, could not, in any degree, be discovered by man.

3. That the vehicle employed in a revelation must be such as infallibly to convey the Divine thoughts to men ; and that human language, therefore, in its ordinary use and acceptation is perfectly adapted to that office : for otherwise, in a case of such infinite concern, some other means would have been employed.

4. That the manner of conveying to men the thoughts of the Divine Mind, in words, according to their current and familiar signification, must of necessity be like that of conveying in words the thoughts of one man to the mind of another : that is, in accordance with man's mental and physical constitution, and his mode of conceiving and expressing his own thoughts in words. A Divine revelation expressed in words, must be conveyed to the minds of the writers in a way agreeable to the laws of their minds in order to their understanding and intelligibly writing what was revealed.

5. That in every particular the contents of a revelation, the mode of communicating them, and the times, circumstances, and connections in which they should be committed to writing, must be determined exclusively by the Revealer himself.

6. That as the supernatural doctrines and facts,

which in their due connection with the history, agency, and character of man, would constitute the Scriptures, were confessedly undiscoverable by men, or by any created beings, and, therefore, must be from God, their own testimony as to their authorship and authenticity would be entitled to be implicitly relied on. Those facts and doctrines would be as conclusive evidence of their Divine original, as the visible works of creation and Providence are of the existence of a creator and ruler of the world,

7. That a Divine revelation would exhibit this evidence in the successive portions of the whole; and by their correlation in respect to covenants, promises, and predictions, and their fulfillments, and by the supernatural facts and doctrines common to the several parts, the evidence would establish the claims alike of all the parts as inseparable, involved in each other, and constituting one consistent and perfected work.

8. That He who created man, knew beforehand that a revelation expressed in words, and written, would be indispensable, and He therefore gave to man a constitution and faculties perfectly adapted to his reception of such a Revelation. Hence He said to Moses: "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, Jehovah? Now, therefore, go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."

9. That *every* portion of the Holy Scriptures must have been given by Inspiration of God, for the same reasons that *any* part or portion was so given—that is, for reasons founded in the nature of the case, the ob-

jects of an infallible rule of faith and life, and the incompetency of man.

10. That the nature and mode of Inspiration must, therefore, be such as to constitute what is written, the infallible word of God; the narratives and facts of ordinary human experience, equally with the original Revelations; the historical, equally with the doctrinal; the figurative, equally with the literal passages; and those most strikingly characterized as of the style and idiom of the writers, equally with all other passages.

11. That all the contents of a volume so provided, must be consistent and harmonious throughout; so that to suppose the contrary, would be as absurd a contradiction as to say that the laws of Nature are not universal, because man has not discovered their application to all the phenomena of Nature.

12. That the objections of skeptics and errorists, to particular narratives, illustrations, styles, and idioms of Scripture, betray the same depravity and ignorance, which lead them to reject the peculiar doctrines revealed immediately from God in words of His own selection.

From the stand point afforded by these considerations, we may apprehend the nature of that Inspiration which is affirmed of the Holy Scriptures.

It is obviously necessary to any useful discussion of this subject that what is meant by *inspiration* should be clearly understood. In the present discussion that term is employed strictly in the sense hereafter to be more fully illustrated, as a Divine act by which thoughts were conveyed to the minds of the sacred writers. This, as is properly signified by the term

itself, and is plainly taught in the Scriptures, is held to be its true and only meaning, to the exclusion not only of all theories of different kinds and degrees of Divine inspiration, but also of the prevalent notion that inspiration was an influence exerted on the faculties of the prophets elevating, superintending, and guiding them. According to this view, that which the Prophets and Apostles wrote was "given," imparted, conveyed to them by inspiration, in distinction from their capacity of discernment or comprehension being increased so as to enable them to discover the things to be written; and being so given, it was both congruous and necessary that it should be conveyed in words and idioms familiar to those who received it, level to their capacity, adapted to their intellectual habits, and their personal circumstances, that in the natural exercise of their faculties, they might comprehend and duly commit it to writing. It is the effect of the act of Inspiration that we are to consider, not the mode in which the Divine efficiency was exerted. And in whatever mode the Divine agency was exerted, the effect produced by it was the reception and intelligent consciousness on the part of the writers, of the truths to be committed to writing, and in the styles, idioms, and collocations in which they were to be inscribed in alphabetic characters. *Subjectively*, the writers received these communications, without any option, volition, or action on their part. *Actively*, they exercised their natural faculties, voluntarily and intelligently, in committing to writing what they were conscious of having received by inspiration. Their subjective relation in receiving by inspiration what they were to write, and as they

were to write it, was the same as in hearing what was audibly spoken to be vocally repeated by them. In the one case they uttered, as they were often expressly commanded to do, the very words which they heard; in the other, they wrote what they internally heard, received, became conscious of by inspiration. In the one case their voluntary agency was exerted only in speaking; in the other only in writing. There appears to be no ground to suppose that their natural faculties were in any degree interfered with in either case; or that they were any otherwise affected or exercised than if the words which they wrote had been spoken to them by one of their fellow-men.

By the terms *Nature* and *mode* of Inspiration, a reference is not intended to the manner of the Divine act, or the mode in which the Divine agency was exerted, in the act of inspiring thoughts into the minds of the sacred writers. That is wholly inscrutable to us. As in respect to the Divine act which regenerates the soul, we know not how it is exerted, but that it is exerted, we know by the effects produced; so in respect to Inspiration, the mode of the Divine agency is not known, but the fact of its being exerted is known by the effect produced, namely, the conveyance of thoughts to the intelligent consciousness of the sacred writers; and the question is, Whether the inspiring act conveyed the thoughts in the words which were to be written, or without words? If with the words, then the prophet would be conscious of the words and thoughts together, as in case of thoughts audibly expressed to him in words. He would conceive and comprehend the thoughts in those words, as he con-

ceives of and comprehends all other thoughts in words ; would be able, therefore, to commit those words to writing ; and when written, as when received by inspiration, they would be infallibly the words of God. But if the thoughts were inspired without words, then the prophet could not be conscious of them in the natural and ordinary way as in other instances of receiving thoughts ; since men are not conscious of uninspired thoughts apart from words. It is according to man's constitution, a law of his mind, that he should be conscious of thoughts only as he is conscious of the words which express them ; a further Divine act, an act suspending that law, would therefore be necessary, by which he should be made conscious of inspired thoughts without words ; and still a further Divine act infallibly guiding him to the choice of the proper words.

Such several and distinct acts are not to be supposed, without evidence, of which there is none within our reach. For the effect of Inspiration as made known to us, was the reception by the sacred writers of the inspired thoughts ; Inspiration being a Divine act by which thoughts are breathed—transmitted—conveyed to the intelligent consciousness of those who were to write them in words. There is no apparent reason why the inspiring act should not convey the thoughts in the words in which they were to be written, so that the recipient should be conscious at once of the thoughts in the words which it behooved him to write. And that such was the effect of the Divine act of Inspiration, is evident from a variety of considerations.

1. It was that which is called the Scriptures—the

writings, the words which were written by the Sacred Penmen, that was given by inspiration. (2 Tim. 3 : 16.)

2. The words as written were the infallible words of God ; which implies that they were conveyed by Him to the writers with the thoughts, so that they could intelligently conceive the thoughts in the words, and commit them to writing. To suppose them after receiving the thoughts by inspiration, to select the words under the guidance of a Divine influence, is to suppose a joint agency in the selection ; in which case the words would not be exclusively the words of God.

3. The necessity of an inspiration of the words to be written, must have been as absolute as that of an inspiration of the thoughts to be expressed in writing ; at least, in innumerable instances—such as those in which words previously unknown to the writer were required, and those in predictions which required typical, figurative, or symbolic representations. So in very numerous instances where words are written which are said to have been spoken at times and places at which the writers were not present ; and cases like that of the prophecy of Enoch recorded by the Apostle Jude. In all such cases it would seem to be indubitable that the words must have been inspired.

4. Though Inspiration was an immediate supernatural work of God ; it is abundantly evident that it did not suspend or counteract any law, function, or faculty of the human mind. The Prophets and Apostles when vocally uttering what they were at the same time receiving by inspiration, had the ordinary use of all their faculties ; and equally so when uttering the same in alphabetic characters.



5. In all other instances thoughts conveyed from one mind to another are conveyed in words, or signs equivalent to vocal articulations ; and there does not appear to be any thing in the nature of the case to justify the supposition that the conveyance of thoughts by inspiration is an exception to the general rule.

6. It is inconceivable that thoughts should be conveyed into the mind of man by inspiration without words, so that he could conceive them without words, and select words whereby to express them, unless the act of Inspiration suspended the natural exercise of his faculties of conception and consciousness, and caused a supernatural consciousness, and power of conception, which would be incompatible with the necessary exercise of those and other faculties in the selection of words. For in the natural exercise of his powers he can neither conceive nor be conscious of thoughts apart from words ; and any Divine guidance of him as a rational agent in the selection of words, must be a guidance of the natural and rational exercise of his faculties.

If it is a law of our nature that we can intellectually conceive thoughts and receive thoughts from others, so as to be conscious of and remember them only in words, then we may with confidence conclude, that both thoughts and words were conveyed by inspiration ; and this accordingly is, in various ways, taught and implied in every part of the Scriptures. To those of the Apostles who were disciples and heard the words of the Lord Jesus, it was promised, that in the exercise of their peculiar office, the Spirit should bring to their remembrance whatever he had said unto them—that is,

should inspire into their minds—render them renewedly conscious of the same words which they had heard spoken, or of the same thoughts in equivalent words. Paul who, not having been a disciple, had not heard those words, was caught up to Paradise to receive revelations of the Gospel directly from the Lord. It was the peculiarity of their office that, in the exercise of it, they spoke and wrote only what was given them by inspiration. The things which they were to testify were communicated to them by inspiration; and they testified them not in words of their own selection, but in the words which the Holy Ghost taught them. (1 Cor. 2.) When accused and brought before magistrates, they were expressly forbidden to premeditate what they should say. “Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour [more strictly, in that *moment*] that speak ye; for *it is not ye that speak*, but the Holy Ghost.” (Mark 13.) “Take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour [moment] what ye ought to say.” (Luke 12.) In these and all other statements and allusions to the subject, the supposition that those who received Divine communications by inspiration, had any agency in selecting the words to express those communications, is precluded. The Holy Ghost spake by them, by David and the prophets, as His instruments. His word was on their tongues. The Divine act of Inspiration did not contravene or disturb the exercise of their natural faculties or the laws which governed them, but was in harmony with them. They acted rationally

and voluntarily in speaking the inspired words, and in writing them.

If the reader doubts as to the alleged law of man's nature, and imagines that he receives, conceives, is conscious of and remembers thoughts independently of words, let him prove it by telling vocally or by writing what those thoughts are. It is a matter for his consciousness to decide; not a matter to be proved to him by argument. If he has a distinct consciousness of thinking or having thoughts upon any subject whatever, otherwise, in fact or degree, than as he is conscious of conceiving those thoughts in words—conceiving particular words as the vesture, vehicle, instrument, adjunct, necessary matrix or condition, of the thoughts—conceiving the thoughts and words together—conceiving and being conscious of the thoughts, in manner and degree, only as he conceives and is conscious of that which signifies them, and which, whether silently articulated or expressed by vocal utterance, or by written characters, we call words; then may he demur and hesitate as to whether the law in question is a law of our nature. But in that case, since it is indubitable that, as a general rule, we conceive and are conscious of our thoughts in words, he ought to be able to specify what thoughts he has, that are not subject to that rule. And that, no doubt, he will be able to do if he has a distinct consciousness of them. And he will be able to tell whether he conceives those particular excepted thoughts in that orderly succession which is necessary to constitute intelligible sentences, or whether he conceives them without that condition, and determines the succession by the

collocation of the words which he selects as the means of expressing them in sentences, propositions, deductions, questions, affirmations, and the like.

If the reader can not discern to his own entire satisfaction, whether or not he does, or by possibility can, think independently of words, he nevertheless may readily perceive that, as to the general rule, he does not. He may perceive this in all instances in which he is distinctly conscious of particular thoughts, and therefore, so far as he has the clear testimony of consciousness, he may conclude that such is the general rule.

It may not be possible to demonstrate that we think only in words and in signs equivalent to words; while on the contrary it is undoubtedly impossible to prove that we do, or can, think independently of words, for we have no consciousness of thinking, except in words. But, considering the importance of the question, Whether it is a law of our intellectual constitution, that every cogitative act includes, as its medium and instrument, the words which express the thoughts conceived? some further observations may be permitted on this point.

The particular words employed in the construction of sentences, and all that concerns the arrangement of them, and their relations, imply that we conceive the thoughts in those words in the orderly succession in which they are disposed. Thus the qualifying words, the particles, the parenthetical and elliptical expressions, the comparisons, the interrogatories, hyperboles, affirmations, negations, and all other modifications of expres-

sion in sentences, imply that the words are not selected and arranged after the thoughts are conceived.

The thought conveyed in a perfect sentence, is that thought only as it is defined, limited, qualified, by the particular words employed and collocated as they are when the sentence is written. To conceive the thought, therefore, is to conceive all that constitutes it a thought as expressed in writing. To conceive it without words would in effect be the same as to conceive it in words duly arranged as when written. As conceived without words it must, in order to express it, be written in the same words that it would be written in, were it conceived in words. Accordingly we are no sooner conscious of the thoughts than we are conscious of the words. There is, therefore, nothing gained by supposing that we do, or can, think without words. The inference from such a supposition would be, at most, only that we first conceive our thoughts independently of words, and that being to no practical purpose, then select the verbal expressions, and conceive the same thoughts in words, to the end that we may be conscious of them, remember them, and express them to others.

But such a supposition is incredible, since there can be no conceivable relation between words, and thoughts conceived independently of words; so that it would be impossible without omniscience or a miracle, to select words proper for thoughts which we were not conscious of, and could not be conscious of without the words.

The difficulty might be illustrated by referring to sentences characterized by ellipses, parentheses, a tropical or deflected use of words, types, allegories, parables, symbolic acts, qualifying words and particles. It

is, at least of all cultivated languages, a feature due to the inconceivable rapidity of thought, that in proportion as they are cultivated and expressive, they exhibit the fewest possible words for the expression of particular thoughts, omitting such as the scope of the sentence would naturally supply without injury to the thought to be expressed; and inserting such parenthetically as, in the connection, would serve the purpose of an independent sentence, or of extended circumlocutions in the text. This feature of spoken and written language is as noticeable in tongues which are most affluent of words, as in those which are least so. For in the most copious there are no words which do not express particular thoughts, or shades of thought, and for which those who are masters of them have not thoughts to be expressed; and in those tongues which have fewer words, the thoughts of those who use them are equally restricted. In either case the rapidity of thought may be equal, and equally give rise to ellipses and parentheses, tropes, emblems, and other illustrative or modifying expressions.

But did we conceive thoughts independently of words, and then by a more slow and deliberate, or at least by a distinct process select the words to be spoken or written, several things, in addition to such conceptions, would naturally be implied. 1. It would be necessary to establish a relation between our words and our thoughts, so as to render one the exact counterpart and correlate of the other. 2. It would be necessary in every sentence to decide, whether in order to a perfect expression of the thought, any ellipsis, parenthesis, trope, comparison, qualifying term, negative

or affirmative, definite or indefinite particle, was demanded and admissible. This would require that all the words of a sentence should be mentally reviewed, the force of each, its relations to the others, and to the thought to be conveyed by the sentence, carefully considered, along with the question, whether the introduction or the omission of any qualifying words or phrases, or any change of words, or of the arrangement of them, would help or mar the sense. The process of selecting and adjusting the words of a sentence, so as correctly to express a particular thought, would be like attempting to translate a sentence, written in our native tongue, into a language foreign to us, with no other guide or assistance than that of a dictionary; or it would be like an attempt so to arrange arithmetical figures as to express unknown and indefinite quantities. For if thoughts exist independently of words, and there is no normal and necessary connection and relation between them, they must be, in regard to any manner of expressing them, wholly indefinite. There is no fixed rule by which to tell what they are, no correlate, no standard by which to measure them. And if words have each a definite meaning, the selection and adjustment of them so as to express particular thoughts, with which they have previously no connection, must be like that of determining unknown and indefinite quantities and proportions by an adjustment of the figures of arithmetic, or like selecting and adjusting sounds so as to constitute to the ear the melody of an unknown tune. For it is undoubtedly true that, if we in any manner conceive or have thoughts independently of words, we are not conscious of them; and while we

are not conscious of them, a conscious selection of words whereby to express them, must be a selection to express what is unknown to us.

To say, on supposition that we think independently of words, that there is, nevertheless, and must be, a relation and connection of our words when selected, with our thoughts as we conceive them, is to give up the point in debate. For either that connection is coëval with the thoughts or is of subsequent and artificial origin. If coëval, then the conception of the thoughts and the words is identical. If not coëval, and founded in the very nature of thought and language, then the connection supposed is not a necessary connection—neither necessary to the existence of the thoughts, nor the cause of our being conscious of and remembering them.

That consciousness of thoughts in words which we have when we conceive particular thoughts, is renewed—reproduced—by the act which we call recollecting or remembering. It is that which we were formerly conscious of that we remember; and that includes the words as invariably and as perfectly as it includes the thoughts remembered—which implies that the two are connected, not by an artificial, casual, or uncertain relation, but inherently and indissolubly, as necessary correlates and concomitants. Our experience and consciousness of agreeable or of painful sensations and emotions, may have a present connection with our thoughts; but when we recollect those agreeable or painful affections, the original sensations are not reproduced, but only a consciousness of the words and the thoughts, which they originally occasioned. The joy



and the pain are not renewed as sensations or emotions, but only our original thoughts of them, and the words which signified them. But invariably, in remembering our past thoughts, we remember the words which were identified with them.

It is worthy of remark as corroborating the fact that we think only in words, not only that in dreams as recollected, there is a distinct remembrance of the words in which successive thoughts passed through the mind, as of words spoken by the dreamer, or words spoken by others to him; but that, in the case of persons who, from total deafness, converse by signs made with the fingers or otherwise, they dream of persons conversing with them, conveying thoughts to them, not by vocal utterances, but only by exhibiting the signs which were of familiar use to them. Those signs are to them, as the medium and instrument of thought, what words are to those who are exempt from deafness. Such persons do not dream of hearing sounds; and those who lose their sight, and are long blind, do not dream of visible objects. Particular instances, illustrating facts like these, are given by writers on intellectual philosophy. Dr. Gregory, as quoted by Abercrombie, mentions that thoughts which sometimes occurred to him in dreams, and even the particular expressions in which they were conveyed, appeared to him afterward, when awake, so just in point of reasoning and illustration, and so good in point of language, that he has used them in his college lectures and in his writings. Another instance is that of a lawyer, to whom a very perplexing case was made clear in a dream, during which he rose from his bed, and having a desk at hand, wrote out

the solution at length. On awaking he remembered the dream, but had no recollection that he had written it, till he discovered the manuscript in his desk. Facts of this nature go far to demonstrate practically, that in all distinct thoughts and trains of thought, words are the coincident medium and vehicle.

To satisfy the demands of this discussion, however, that we do not think independently of words, is sufficiently manifest from the consideration, that we remember our thoughts only in the words in which we conceive them; and that in those words we shall continue to remember them while memory lasts, both in the present and in the future life. Our entire responsibility as moral agents seems to require this. It is essential to our consciousness of personal identity, and to the process and the issues of the final judgment, and hence the bearing of this view of language—of conception in the mind, and reception from without, of thoughts in words, and of the consciousness and memory of them only in words—on the state of the soul of each individual, as to his consciousness of guilt or the contrary in the present life, and after death, is highly significant. For if thoughts can be remembered only in words, if a recollection of the words necessarily recalls the thoughts, so that the mind is unavoidably conscious of them, and if an entire oblivion, or non-recollection of the words precludes a renewed consciousness of the thoughts which had been conceived and enshrined in them, then the phenomena of which we are conscious with respect to our past experience, thoughts, words, acts, feelings, and consciousness of guilt, or the contrary, in connection with them, are accounted for.

We are conscious of our past states of mind, whether good or evil, only as we remember the words in which we thought of them when they occurred; and therefore we are conscious of the sinfulness of past acts, feelings, and emotions, no further than they are distinctly recalled in the words in which we think of them.

Hence when a sinner is awakened to perceive the corruption and wickedness of his heart, and the sinfulness of all his thoughts, feelings, and actions, his memory is quickened to recall his former experience, and especially the most corrupt and flagrant, though long-forgotten instances of his conduct. So when regenerated, and during the ensuing conflict to the close of life, he is conscious of the states of mind which have transpired, of the evil acts, thoughts, and affections on the one hand, and of the holy and obedient ones on the other, only as they are recalled to memory in words.

Such being the law of our minds, and such our experience in the present life, the Scriptures very clearly forewarn us, that such, by the permanence of that law, will be the experience of men after death. In the righteous there will be such oblivion of the transgressions of their former lives, as is implied in their being blotted out, and as will consist with their perfect and uninterrupted bliss. They will realize in their experience that He, to whom their guilt was imputed, had done a perfect work, and made them in respect to the law which they had transgressed, and to their consciousness of guilt, as though they had never sinned. The unrighteous, on the other hand, with their memories freed from all obstructions, and quickened to the utmost,

will forever be conscious of all their evil thoughts, words, and agencies.

With respect to the particular subject of the present inquiry, that of the conveyance by Inspiration of thoughts, in and by means of words, to the minds of the sacred writers, let it be observed: that thoughts conveyed from one human mind to another, are invariably conveyed in words, or signs equivalent to articulate utterances; and they are received, comprehended, and rendered matter of consciousness, only so far as the words or signs are consciously recognized and understood. The same is true of all the communications from angelic beings to men, of which we have any record; and likewise of those from Satan. In what ways he can affect the feelings and emotions of men, is another question. But when he conveys any distinct thoughts to the human mind, he does it, so far as we know, only in words and their equivalents. Thus by means of words he conveyed his thoughts to Eve; and so to the false prophets. And there seems to be no room for a question, but that in all the thoughts received from those beings, and equally in all the thoughts conveyed by man to them, or conceived respecting them, words are the invariable medium. Such is the constitution of things—such the law of man's nature.

It is thus plain and palpable, that man in the ordinary exercise of all his intellectual and rational faculties, can and does receive thoughts from other *created* intelligences, in and by means of words. Does not this law obtain likewise in respect to the thoughts conveyed by inspiration from God? That it does, is the only conclusion which the facts and analogies known to us

can justify. There is no known fact or apparent reason to justify a contrary supposition. Since the thoughts of one created intelligence can be conveyed to another by means of words, it is certain that the thoughts of the Infinite Intelligence may be so conveyed; and since the conveyance of thoughts in words from one man to another does not infringe, but is in harmony with the laws of his intelligent nature, it is plain that the conveyance of the Divine thoughts in words by inspiration, may be in harmony with those laws.

All intellectual conceptions include the words, or equivalent signs, by which they are intelligibly expressed; and they are necessarily expressed in the words or signs in which they are conceived. To suppose that they can be vocally expressed in any other than the words in which he who expresses conceives them, is as absurd as to suppose that he can convey them by writing words which have a different and contrary meaning; and to say that he can think them without words, is no less absurd than to say that he can express them in writing without writing words. Sensations and emotions, in so far as they occur and exist independently of words, occur and exist independently of thought. But whatever the subjects of thought may be, whether physical or intellectual, geometrical figures or arithmetical proportions, facts or fictions, history or biography, moral precepts or religious doctrines, there are no distinct thoughts of them of which men are conscious, except in words, and words which when spoken or written express them to others.

Words, vocally articulated, or silently conceived and realized to the consciousness, are conditions, vehicles,

instruments of thought. Without them there is no consciousness of thought. Uttering them is thinking aloud. A knowledge of words, or of signs equivalent in significance to words, is a condition precedent to the exercise of the power of thinking. Hence the necessity of teaching the meaning of words and signs to children. They first learn the meaning of signs, gestures, expressive looks; next that of sounds, vocal articulations, particular words, exclamations, interrogations, commands, phrases, sentences. These being associated with the thoughts which they are employed to convey, they remember. By recalling and reasoning from these they learn to think. The more their knowledge of words is extended, the more they are enabled to exercise the power of thinking.

Our consciousness and experience wholly forbid the supposition that the choice of words succeeds instead of being identical with the conception of thought. We have no consciousness of thought separately from words, or independently of them. We receive no thoughts by means of the vocal articulations, or the writings of others, except in words of which we previously understand the meaning. And if our consciousness is to be relied on, we no more, after intellectually conceiving a thought, select the word or words in which we become conscious of it, than after receiving the thoughts of another person by hearing his voice, or reading what he has written, we select the words in which we become conscious of the thoughts so received. We therefore conclude that without a proper miracle, the Divine thoughts conveyed into the minds of the prophets by inspiration, were of necessity conveyed in

the very words which they wrote; that they were conscious of those thoughts in those words, and that they no more selected those words than their readers select the words in which they receive the thoughts which are expressed in Scripture.

It may be worth the further observation that, viewed in another light, the supposition that thoughts without words were inspired into the minds of the sacred writers, and that the task of selecting the words they were to write to express those thoughts, was left to them, is in the last degree preposterous and incredible. For from the nature of the inspired thoughts, the revelations, doctrines, precepts, promises, threatenings, predictions, covenants, the selection of words to express the exact meaning and shade of meaning intended to be conveyed, would as truly require omniscience as an original conception of the thoughts themselves without any Divine inspiration. No conceivable amount of guidance, short of a proper miracle, could supersede this difficulty. For, to say nothing of the necessity of a miracle to render them conscious of the thoughts without words, it is obvious that such a consciousness could be no guide to them in the choice of words. Being exclusive of words, it could have no relation to them. They would be left to invent or to appropriate words without any rule to govern or assist them, to express meanings upon which the hopes and destinies of men were to be suspended.

That they could not possibly have had a clearer conception of the thoughts without words than with, must be allowed, or we must conclude that in the words selected their conceptions are but imperfectly conveyed.

But suppose them to have had as clear conceptions as their words convey, since their conceptions and their consciousness of the thoughts were exclusive of words, what but omniscience could enable them to select such words as should infallibly convey precisely those conceptions to their uninspired fellow-men? Suppose even that the thoughts as conceived by them without words, were conceived in the same orderly, grammatical succession which marks the exhibition of them in the written Scriptures; that their non-verbal conceptions included the necessary distinctions of modes and tenses, interrogatories, exclamations, questions and answers, quotations and parentheses, figures and symbols, what, short of omniscience, could enable them to meet the verbal demands of such conceptions, to select such words in such relations to each other, as infallibly and perfectly to convey the thoughts conceived? Is it not apparent that the slightest imperfection, either in the choice or in the collocation of the words, might be fatal to the record as a rule of life; and that the writers could give no evidence or assurance that the conceptions conveyed by their words were precisely the same with those which they had been conscious of without words?

The case is wholly different when once the inspired thoughts have been committed to writing; for the words actually employed confessedly express all that is pretended to have been revealed and inspired. The thoughts are conceived by the reader, in the words, and according to his knowledge and understanding of the words. The words are the medium of the thoughts, and when the thoughts are perfectly conceived in the



words, he who so conceives them can express them in other words which he perfectly understands, whether in his native or in a foreign tongue. He has a rule to govern him which is as adequate to the case as any law of his intellectual nature. He is conscious of the coincidence and identity of the thoughts and words.

The Divine act of inspiration, as is intended to be shown hereafter, was not properly miraculous. It did not suspend or counteract any law of the human mind. But, according to the constitution and laws of the mind, the conveyance of thoughts from one man to another necessarily requires the conveyance of the words by which the thoughts are expressed. If, therefore, the act of inspiration was not a miracle, the inspired thoughts must have been conveyed in the words which express them.

If the act of inspiration were a miracle, suspending that law of the mind by which we conceive, receive from others, are conscious of, and remember thoughts only in words—and conveying thoughts without words, then, as no man in the natural exercise of his faculties is either conscious of or remembers thoughts apart from words, we must conclude that the sacred writers were not intelligently conscious of the thoughts which were conveyed to their minds by inspiration, or that their consciousness of them, independently of words, was miraculous. If they had no consciousness of the inspired thoughts, then, of course, their agency could not have been exercised in the selection of words expressive of them. If their consciousness of them was miraculous, then the natural exercise of their faculties was superseded, and could not have been employed in a

selection of words. The selection, like the consciousness, must have been supernatural—miraculous; not the effect of human, but of Divine agency. Nothing, therefore, is gained by such a supposition, nor was there any occasion for any such miracle. The natural and ordinary way of conveying thoughts from one mind to another, is by means of words. If men can convey their thoughts to each other by the instrumentality of words, what can possibly hinder the Divine Being from conveying his thoughts to man by the same means? Suffice it, at present, to add that it is not more indubitably certain that the Scriptures contain revelations from God, than that they were verbally expressed and conveyed in the words which were written to express them. Such, manifestly, was the case with all those portions of Scripture which are expressly declared to have been audibly spoken to the sacred writers by the Divine Revealer. That the other portions were inspired into the minds of the writers in the words which they wrote, will, it is presumed, be rendered evident in the ensuing pages.

This view obviates the principal objections which embarrass the prevalent theories. According to these theories there is a difficulty, not hitherto surmounted, as to how or on what infallible ground the words of the sacred Text are, in the Scriptures themselves, declared to be the words of God. If they were selected by men—if man's agency was in any degree exerted in their selection, how are they the exclusive and infallible words of God? It is not a conclusive or satisfactory answer to this question to say that they were infallibly guided. For supposing them to have been so

guided, if the act of selecting the words was their act, then the words selected were their words. Moreover, where do the Scriptures teach us, or give so much as a hint concerning any such guidance, or any act or process by which words of man's selection ceased to be his and were adopted or constituted to be the words of God?

No theory upon the subject can be conclusive and satisfactory which does not exhibit as the effect of inspiration, infallibility in thought and language. This result may indeed seem to be attained, by saying that the sacred penmen were guided both in thought and language by the Holy Spirit, so as to be in such a sense His organs, that what they said He said. This would indeed express substantially the result which the case requires; and if they were so guided, the production of the result would seem to be accounted for. But where is the proof of any such guidance of the human faculties in the conception of the necessary thoughts, and in the selection of the necessary words? Is there any scriptural proof of it—or any semblance of proof other than that of an inference from the supposed necessity of the case? The passages, John 16: 13, "The Spirit *will guide you* into all truth," and 14: 26, "He shall *bring all things to your remembrance*," need only to be read with the context to show that they express no proof of the point in question; but on the contrary, that the *guidance* promised was not to enable them to discover truth, or to select words, but to insure their being taught by having all things brought to their remembrance, which Christ had *spoken*, and their reception of all truth which should be *spoken* and *shown* to

them by the Spirit. Thus: "The Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you." These Scriptures plainly show, that all that the Apostles were to know, speak, and write as the word of God, was to be conveyed—inspired—into their minds by the Spirit in the words previously spoken by Christ, and recalled to their remembrance by the aid of Inspiration, and the words to be spoken—inspired—conveyed into their minds by the Spirit, as the words of God which He, the Spirit, was commissioned to take, receive, and speak of the things of Christ. The selection of what was to be spoken by the Spirit is expressly referred to Him. An infallible *guidance* to the *selection*, either of thoughts or words, can be supposed only on the assumption that Inspiration is affirmed of the sacred writers personally, instead of being affirmed solely of what they wrote. No two things can be more distinct and different from each other than these two, and nothing can be more evident from the Scriptures themselves, than that it was what the sacred penmen wrote that was inspired into their minds. And if they were indebted to inspiration for the thoughts which were to be expressed in writing, the fact that the written words

are the words of God, is not a premise from which it follows that they were infallibly guided, in the exercise of their faculties, to the selection of the words, or that they exercised their faculties at all in the selection, instead of being wholly indebted to inspiration for the words as well as for the thoughts.

Concerning the notion so generally prevalent, that the effect of inspiration was an effect on the intellectual faculties of the sacred writers, instead of being the conveyance of thoughts into their minds, some further observations may be permitted in this place. And first, it is confidently averred that the Scriptures themselves afford no indication whatever that there was more than one kind or degree of inspiration ; and second, that no conceivable influence on the finite natural faculties of man could enable him to discover and originate the conception of the leading truths of revelation. Those truths must undoubtedly have been communicated to him from the Infinite Intelligence, in order to his conceiving, or attaining any conception of them. Hence the Apostle's argument touching the counsels and purposes of God, which man never did nor could discover, that "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit ;" and his illustration : "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him ? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." To which he adds, that those otherwise inscrutable things were freely given to them by the Spirit of God, and that they spoke them in the words which the Spirit taught them. (1 Cor. 2.) Thus, to specify no other instances, it is clear that the purposes of God concerning the salvation of men by a

Divine Redeemer, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the doctrines of the resurrection, a final judgment, and eternal retributions, must have been revealed and conveyed to man by Inspiration; and if the rest of the contents of the Bible were not all inspired in the same way, then there was more than one kind of inspiration, or else those contents were not all inspired in any way.

How universally it has been taken for granted that the Divine inspiration which is affirmed of the holy Scriptures, was an influence on the faculties and capacities of men, may be seen by referring to the various works of theologians, commentators, essayists, and philosophers, which discuss or allude to the subject, from the period of the Reformation to the present time. It is solely on the basis of this mistaken notion that different kinds and degrees of inspiration have been imagined. This notion, of course, pervades the theories and expositions of all the rationalistic writers, and is essential to them. One of the latest and ablest of them, Mr. Morell, in his "Philosophy of Religion," maintains expressly that "inspiration is only a higher potency of what every man possesses to some degree:" that is, a more or less developed or excited intellectual, intuitional, and emotional consciousness of religious truths. Every man, it is assumed, has such consciousness to some degree. To have it to a higher than the ordinary or natural degree, is to be inspired. It is inspiration that distinguishes poets and geniuses from other men; and in like manner distinguishes religious teachers—the sacred writers.

On the other hand, Doctor Dick, a Scotch Presbyterian minister, in his "Essay on the Inspiration of the

Holy Scriptures," says: "I define Inspiration to be *such an influence of the Holy Ghost on the understandings, imaginations, memories, and other mental powers of the writers of the Sacred Books, as perfectly qualified them for communicating to the world the knowledge of the will of God.*"

The distinction made in support of their views, by those who imagine different degrees and kinds of inspiration, between the doctrinal and the historical and other matter of the Scriptures, is entirely gratuitous. The facts and doctrines are so interwoven, so dependent on each other, and often, in respect to the thoughts conveyed, so identical, as to render it impossible to establish such a distinction. Often, indeed, the most important doctrines are contained in verbal statements of fact; as in the first chapter of Genesis, and in the historical narratives of the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ. They are misled, as in respect to infallible guidance, by supposing the inspiration to be affirmed of the Sacred Penmen, as if it were an influence exerted on their faculties, instead of being affirmed solely of what was inspired into their minds, and written by them.

An error no less prevalent, is that of supposing man to have been the inventor and architect of language; a notion which, among other things, implies that he had, prior to the invention, the power of thinking and of expressing his thoughts without words.

With these are associated a variety of kindred notions, such as that ideas are images impressed on the mind, and held independently of words; that words are merely the signs of *things*, and are necessarily of

defective and uncertain significance; and that the figurative use of words is regulated by no law, and is peculiarly liable to misconstruction and uncertainty of meaning.

That language was a primeval gift; that thinking is possible only in words as the medium, instrument, and vehicle of thought; that we conceive thoughts intellectually, receive thoughts from others, are conscious of them, and retain them in the memory as we express them vocally and in writing, only in words; that the conveyance of thoughts into the mind by inspiration, necessarily includes the inspiration of words; that inspiration is affirmed in the Scriptures of the words which constitute the writing; that words necessarily and perfectly express the thoughts conceived in them, and that it is their office to represent thoughts, and not things: to discuss and illustrate these propositions, and others connected with them, and their relations to the infallible authority of the word of God, and to the intellectual and physical constitution, faculties, acts, and consciousness of man, is the object of the ensuing pages.

A few words may be necessary concerning the object to be aimed at, in a discussion of this subject. The special object to be had in view, is not to prove and illustrate the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures for the conviction of those who believe with the heart unto righteousness. They already have the highest possible conviction, from the witness of the Holy Spirit with their spirits to the effects wrought in them through the instrumentality of the inspired and written word. They are conscious of the coincidence produced be-



tween their natures—their primary beliefs—and the truths of Scripture; and between the feelings and emotions of their renewed hearts and the ‘word of faith’ which the Spirit employs. The Divine light and authority of Scripture are realized to them. A Divine self-evidencing radiance beams from the sacred page upon their understandings and their hearts. The word of God has, by the Divine influence, been rendered quick and powerful in them. They are ‘taught of God.’ The Spirit teaches them, not by new revelations, but by causing them to discern, believe, and obey, the truths already revealed; not by creating new intellectual faculties, but by quickening, rectifying, and illuminating their previously blinded and perverted faculties.

But the special object to be aimed at, is the rational conviction of those who are not so taught; and who, from ignorance and prejudice, or from false principles, are in a state of doubt and indifference, or of aversion and opposition. It requires to be made manifest to such, that the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures is proved by evidences which reason can not countervail.

In the exhibition of these evidences, it must be assumed that certain truths relating to God and to man are admitted by those who are addressed. To men who profess to be atheists, and to infidels and deists, who deny that the Scriptures contain revelations from God, and deny that man needs either a Saviour from sin, or any inspired rule of faith and life, it would be futile to address an argument on this subject. Those who are addressed must be supposed to believe in the existence of God, his moral perfections, and his rela-

tion to man as a moral and accountable creature; and to believe in the fallen state of man, his incapacity to discover the most essential religious truths, and that the Bible contains truths of fact and doctrine which, had they not been given by inspiration, could not be discovered or conceived.

To all such, the question is: Whether the Scriptures are the word of God, so given by inspiration as to be of Divine authority, and binding on the faith and conscience of man? If so, what is the nature and effect of the Divine act of inspiration? Did that act convey the inspired truths in the words, idioms, and phrases of the sacred text as written by the prophets and apostles? Did this take place with reference to the entire volume of Scripture? In considering these questions, it is properly deemed to be admitted and incontrovertible, that the Scriptures do in fact contain Revelations from God which were recorded by the sacred writers.

Again, with respect to the miraculous character of inspiration, something needs to be said in these preliminary notices. A proper scriptural miracle, is an immediate act of God, producing effects which are both supernatural and contra-natural. Inspiration is an immediate act of God producing supernatural, but not contra-natural effects. It is, therefore, not a proper miracle, but is miraculous only as it transcends nature and the agency of second causes. In this respect it may with propriety be classed with that Divine act, the effect of which is the renovation of the human soul; and that which, without any visible or mediate agency, caused the chains to fall from Peter's hands, and the iron gate of his prison to fly open; and many others

recorded in Scripture: acts above the powers of man and of Nature, supernatural and Divine, but which did not suspend or contravene any laws of Nature, but were exerted in conformity with those laws. For it does not appear that the Divine act of inspiration suspended or counteracted any law, function, or faculty of the human mind. That act, on the contrary, appears to have been exerted in concurrence with the natural exercise of the rational faculties of men—with their way of receiving thoughts from their fellow-men, conceiving them in words, and becoming intelligently conscious of them. Doubtless the sacred writers had an intelligent consciousness of the inspired thoughts which they were to express in writing; and in committing them to writing, exercised their faculties in the ordinary way. And since their consciousness of them was, for aught that appears, like that of all other thoughts, the fact that those thoughts were conveyed to them by inspiration, can afford no ground to conclude that the act of conveying them suspended or counteracted any law of their minds. That act, however, was supernatural and Divine; for nothing but the immediate exertion of the Divine efficiency could convey to them thoughts, doctrines, facts, previously known only to God, and in their nature undiscoverable by man.

Let it further be observed, that the term *Scripture* is employed to signify all that is written in the sacred volume. The received canon is established upon such ample grounds of authority, that we are as much bound to receive each and every of the Sacred Books as of Divine inspiration and authority, as any one

of them. The Books then extant were collectively distinguished by our Lord and his apostles, as the Scriptures, the Holy Scriptures, the Oracles of God, the Word of God—which phrases were well understood to signify what had been given by Inspiration. By the successors of the Apostles, after the New Testament Canon had been completed, the entire volume was distinguished by the phrases quoted above, and others of the same comprehensive import—as the Divine Scriptures, the Divine Oracles, the Sacred Scriptures, the Divine Word, the Scriptures of the Lord, the Old and New Testaments. The several Books which constitute the present canon were enumerated, those of the Old Testament by Jewish writers, and those both of the Old and New by several of the early Christian writers. Those of both Testaments were, shortly after the apostolic age, collected into a distinct volume, which was called the Book of Scripture—the Ancient and New Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments. See Lardner, Horne's Introduction, and authorities quoted by Paley.

Lastly, considering the acknowledged necessity of a revelation from God to man, and the nature of the facts and doctrines which the Scriptures contain, it is obvious and reasonable to assume, that their Divine Author had a specific purpose and plan to be exhibited and accomplished by their publication; and that He inspired and caused to be written such, and only such things, as in the view of Infinite Wisdom were necessary to the perfect accomplishment of that plan. And since the Bible as a whole has the unqualified sanction both of Divine and human testimony, as being the word of God, given by inspiration, every part of its

contents is consistent with the rest, and equally derives its authority from Him by its inspiration. When, therefore, it is claimed for the Scriptures collectively that they are the word of God, much more is claimed for them than that they were written by His direction, or by His direction and assistance; as in the case of any writings claimed to be the writings of a particular man, much more is meant than that they were written by his direction and assistance. It is claimed that they express in his own words and on his own authority the thoughts which he intended to express, whether in the mechanical process of writing he employed an amanuensis or not. Less than this would not constitute him the author, and render him absolutely and unavoidably responsible. It is, therefore, in this sense claimed for the Scriptures as the word of God, that the particular thoughts which He intended should be expressed, were inspired into the minds of the sacred writers in the words which He intended should be employed to express them; and that they involve His infinite and immutable authority, and consequently are a perfect rule of faith and life. If every part of the original text is not in this sense His word, then it can not be determined which part, if any, is His word, in any such sense as indisputably to involve His authority and be binding on man's conscience. But if every part of it is His word, then every part of it was given by His inspiration, and He must have determined, in respect to every particular word and sentence, what should be written and published as His word. Whether portions of its histories, biographies, facts, precepts, observations, were or were not previously known to the writers,

could, in this relation, make no difference. For if any words of the text were inserted on man's authority and discretion—inserted without being inspired of God, it can not be claimed for them, that they are His words. They may be just and true in their import, but they can not be known to be so on the authority and as the words of God. In respect to what He determined to include in the sacred volume, it could be of no consequence what particulars the writers were acquainted with before. Thus with reference, for example, to the Four Gospels. The particulars recorded by Matthew and John, were for the most part previously within their personal knowledge; while that was not the case with Mark and Luke. But who will pretend that the words and sentences which were written by the two last, were any more or otherwise inspired, than those which were written by the two first-named Evangelists? So with respect to the Book of Genesis, of which no item of the contents could have been previously within the personal knowledge of Moses. Whatever traditions may have been handed down through a period of twenty five hundred years, we may confidently assert that many of the things contained in that Book, could have been communicated to him only by immediate inspiration; and it would be a violent and incredible presumption to suppose that, for the rest of the contents, he relied on tradition. Even had ample traditions existed among the Hebrews in their Egyptian bondage, it is a far more incredible supposition, that he was infallibly guided to make a selection from them, and a selection of words by which to express them, than that he received them in their proper order and connections, by immediate verbal inspiration.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE NATURE OF INSPIRATION.

THE Holy Scriptures claim to be the word of God, on the ground that they were inspired by Him. Their inspiration, therefore, must have been of a nature to justify that designation. Their being given by inspiration, proves that they verbally express His thoughts in the words which constitute the writing. Large portions of them consist of words which are declared to have been audibly spoken by Him. Of those portions, the inspiration, whether coincident with the vocal utterance, or the result of a Divine act recalling and renewing to the intelligent consciousness of the Prophets, what they had heard, must have included the words which had been audibly articulated. The Divine act of inspiration, whatever may have characterized it in other respects, conveyed to their minds His thoughts in His words; and, therefore, the words which they wrote, are His. All that we can discern, or are concerned to know of the nature of that act, is thus shown by the effect produced—the conveyance of thoughts in words. The portions of Scripture above referred to, are admitted by all who believe in any inspiration, to

have been inspired ; and if, in respect to them, the inspiring act conveyed the thoughts in the words by which they are expressed in the original text, then, to that extent we discern the nature and effect of inspiration, and have ground on which to ascribe the same effect to the inspiration of the rest of Scripture—the inspiration of all that the Divine Wisdom saw fit to include and cause to be written in the sacred volume.

Such an effect is accordingly signified by the word inspiration. That word is the same in English as in French, and signifies “the act of *breathing into* any thing—the *infusion* of ideas into the mind by the Holy Spirit.” The Hebrew word is rendered : “Inspiration—*breathing into*—the breath of the Lord.” The Greek, “Divinely *inspired*.” The meaning of the word as applied to the Holy Scriptures, is founded on the analogy between the impulsion of air from without, into the body, and the conveyance of thoughts from without into the mind.

Thoughts conceived in the mind may be compared to material forms seen by the eye. They are *conceived in words*, as visible objects are seen in their proper form and outline. By means of words the mind is conscious of particular thoughts ; as by means of their distinct forms we distinguish and are conscious of seeing particular objects. Words are the *medium and instrument of thought*. Thoughts audibly expressed to a prophet would be conveyed to his mind conjointly with the words, and his reception of them would result from his understanding the words uttered. And thoughts conveyed to his mind by Divine inspiration must of necessity be conveyed in words in order to his being



conscious of receiving them : for no man is conscious of thinking or of receiving, holding, comprehending, or remembering distinct thoughts, disconnected from the words which, if expressed, vocally or in writing, would distinctly represent them.

The visual perception of a person or a statue, produces in the mind an effect like that of reading or hearing the names of those objects. The visible object in the one case, is to the mind what the vocal sound and written word are in the other. The same thought results in each case coincidentally with the perception. But that thought does not arise except as it is intellectually conceived in words ; nor does the mind otherwise become conscious of it, or remember it. The production in the mind of an equivalent result—the intelligent consciousness of particular thoughts—is the purpose and effect of inspiration. And since thought can not transcend consciousness, and we are conscious of thoughts only in words, inspiration must of necessity convey words with thoughts, or it would convey nothing of which the recipient could be conscious.

*Divine inspiration is the act of God, by which He conveyed to the minds of the sacred writers the thoughts which they were to express in the Holy Scriptures.* And inasmuch as He alone could determine what thoughts should be expressed, and as man could not in the rational and ordinary exercise of his faculties receive inspired or other thoughts otherwise than as they are conceived in words, it follows that He conveyed to them by Inspiration what they wrote—the thoughts in the words by which they are expressed.

The word Revelation appropriately signifies the com-

munication of truth from God to men. To reveal, is to disclose, discover, make known. The Hebrew word signifies to uncover, to disclose, or make manifest by acts and events, and to reveal, disclose, communicate truths to the mind by words or signs. Thus in the history of Samuel: it is said when Jehovah first called him, that the word of the Lord was not yet *revealed* to him; and subsequently, that "the Lord *revealed* Himself to Samuel in Shiloh, by the word of the Lord." Again: "Now the Lord had told—*revealed to*—Samuel in his ear, a day before Saul came, saying, To-morrow about this time, I will send thee a man." David, after receiving a special revelation from God, by the mouth of Nathan, says: "And now, O Lord God, the word that Thou hast spoken concerning Thy servant and concerning his house, establish it forever. . . For Thou, O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, hast *revealed* to Thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house." Isaiah says: "It was *revealed* in mine ears by the Lord of Hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord God of Hosts." Surely, says Amos, "the Lord God will do nothing but He *revealeth* His secret unto His servants the prophets." "A tale-bearer *revealeth* secrets"—that is, by speaking words. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are *revealed*, belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may keep all the words of this law."

The Greek word is of similar import, signifying the communication of thoughts by words audibly uttered, by causing a verbal conception of them in dreams, or by the instrumentality of external signs and manifest-

ations. The wise men were *warned* of God in a dream, That they should not return to Herod. "It was *revealed* unto Simeon, by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ." "Moses was *admonished* of God, when he was about to make the tabernacle: For See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount." "Noah was *warned* of God, of things not seen as yet." He received *revelations* in words audibly spoken. "If they escaped not who refused him that *spake* on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven." The things which man could not discover, God hath "*revealed* unto us by His Spirit." The mystery of Christ "is now *revealed* unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body." "Unto the prophets it was *revealed*, that, not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister."

In both Testaments wherever the words which are translated, *reveal*, *revealed*, *revelation*, are applied to any thing contained in the Scriptures, distinct verbal communications are referred to. Often it is expressly said that the very words which were employed by the revealing Spirit, were the words which are written; and there is no reasonable ground to conclude that such was not the case uniformly. On the contrary, the conclusion that the words which were inspired by the Spirit, were the very words which the Sacred Penmen wrote, is justified by the declared usage in numerous instances, and with respect to the rest, by the nature of inspiration as a Divine act conveying thoughts to

the minds of the Sacred Penmen to be by them expressed in writing ; by the parallel usage of the prophets and apostles in speaking the words which had been spoken to them, or inspired into their minds ; by the fact that often the thoughts were such as they were incapable of selecting words to express ; and in a word, by every consideration relating to the subject.

## CHAPTER IV.

## VOCAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE.

THOUGHT is conceived and expressed in words, and equivalent signs, as its medium, instrument, and representative, in a variety of ways.

1st. By all the articulate vocal sounds, which constitute spoken language.

2d. By all those significant acts and gestures which are employed in place of spoken and written words.

3d. By picture writing—in which thoughts are represented by pictures, which have a metaphorical import—the leading circumstance in a subject being portrayed to indicate or express the whole.

4th. By hieroglyphics, which represent spoken words, syllables, and letters—to read or interpret which, is to utter the words—the vocal sounds—which they respectively represent.

A large class of hieroglyphics represented particular words; another class denoted thoughts which were easily associated with each other, by analogy or resemblance. But into whatever classes the simple and the more complex hieroglyphics may be distributed, they were all representations of spoken words, sylla-

bles, or letters, and were read like other kinds of writing, as representing vocal sounds. It is obvious, indeed, from the nature of the subject, that the characters employed in hieroglyphic writing, were employed for the same purpose and to the same effect, as the letters and words of alphabetic writing. For those characters were employed to express such thoughts only as the writer could express vocally, in words; since to read them, their force and meaning must first be understood in the vulgar tongue, as the reading of them must of necessity be the utterance of words of corresponding import, in like manner as in reading Greek or Latin into English. To suppose that hieroglyphics stood for *things*, and not for *words*, or rather for thoughts as words do, is to suppose, in opposition to experience, that they can not be read in the words of ordinary language, and that men can think and express their thoughts to others without words.

5th. By arbitrary marks to which a specific meaning and pronunciation are assigned, as in the instance of the Chinese written characters, which, though not alphabetic, are representative of vocal sounds.

6th. By every species of alphabetic writing.

These several methods of writing are alike in this, that they represent *spoken words*, so that the reading of what is written, is simply a repetition or utterance of the vocal sounds which the writing represents. Such, indeed, in its relation to thought, is the only office of writing; notwithstanding that most of the characters in picture writing, and many of those in hieroglyphic, are in their form suggestive of the meaning which they are intended to express. Spoken words, are *audible*

*thoughts*. Pictures, hieroglyphics, and alphabetic marks, are *visible thoughts*.

When men express themselves orally, it is by uttering the words in which they conceive their thoughts. When they express their thoughts by any species of writing, it is by alphabetic or other marks, which represent the words in which they think. If they indicate their meaning by gestures or significant acts, it is by such as are adapted, and understood, like words, to represent their thoughts. And it is no less true that thoughts in the mind, which are not in any manner expressed, are, at least so far as we are conscious of them, silently articulated or clothed in words. Internal sensations and emotions may arise without any consciousness of the words by which they might be described. But no one can exercise his mind in thinking of any thing within or without, real or imaginary, without being conscious of the words which he would employ, were he audibly to express his thoughts. Even in dreams and visions the thoughts are conceived and embodied in the words in which they are afterwards remembered; as are all the thoughts of whatever kind, that are treasured up in the memory. They are distinctly remembered and recalled, no further than the words are in which they were originally conceived.

In addition to the foregoing sketch of the modes in which men receive and express their thoughts, by vocal sounds, significant acts, and alphabetic or other writing, a reference is due to *representative symbols*; which are of frequent occurrence in the prophetic Scriptures, as representing, on the ground of analogy or resemblance, agents, acts, and effects of a different

nature and sphere from themselves. Agents and phenomena which are perceptible by the senses, are employed as symbols to represent other agents and phenomena, which are in some respect analogous. The revelation conveyed by these means, is neither received by the prophet, nor expressed by him in words, but is signified by the things symbolized. He sees the symbol literally, or in prophetic vision, and discerns its characteristics, and from their analogy to those of the object symbolized, infers what is intended to be fore-shown. In writing, he employs words in their literal sense, not to express what is revealed, but merely to describe the symbol as it appeared to his senses.

There is an analogy between the office of words as the instrument of thought, and that of light as the instrument of vision, and of air as the instrument of hearing. The power of seeing exists, but in the absence of light is dormant. The presence of light is a condition of the exercise of the visual faculty. Light is to the act by which the mind perceives external objects, what words are to the act of thinking, and air to the act of hearing. By means of light we become conscious of seeing, through the medium of the eye. By means of air we become conscious of hearing, through the ear. So by means of words we become conscious of thinking, and by means of the vocal organs and of writing, of expressing our thoughts audibly and visibly to ourselves and others.

That capability of the soul by which we see and in the act of seeing distinguish the forms and colors of external objects, and by which in hearing we distinguish particular sounds, is the same with that by which the



soul in thinking distinguishes its successive thoughts by a necessary condition and adjunct of thought which renders us conscious of what we think, and which we express by vocal articulations. As we are conscious of seeing only as we are conscious of distinguishing particular forms and colors, and of hearing only as we are conscious of distinguishing particular sounds; so we are conscious of thinking only as we are conscious of that discriminating adjunct of thought, which, by means of the vocal organs, we render audible in words. Inasmuch, that our experience and consciousness being the only test, we can no more think without that adjunct, which as we are conscious of it and express it audibly, constitutes our words, than we can see and hear without distinguishing colors and sounds.

If it be asked how, by what process, or at what stage of the process of thinking, does the mind supply that contingent of thought, which, when realized to the consciousness, and when articulated, constitutes language?—let him answer who can tell how, by what process and at what stage, the mind discriminates forms, colors, sounds, relations, proportions, and other qualities? Such discrimination accompanies and is essential to the acts of seeing and hearing; but is in no degree due to the mechanical structure, capacity, or operation of the visual and auditory organs. Infinite varieties of figures, colors, sounds, relations, proportions, qualities, and numbers, exist externally, which as soon as they are brought to the notice of the mind, are perfectly discriminated and distinguished from each other, so that we are no sooner conscious of noticing

them than we are conscious of the discrimination. If a definition be desired of that adjunct, concomitant, medium and vehicle of thought, of which we are conscious when we think—a definition explaining what it is prior to any mental or vocal articulation, but which when silently cognized, and when vocally expressed, is articulate language, let him answer who can, consistently with his own consciousness—if it be not a sufficient and satisfactory answer to say, that it is that which, when we are conscious of what we think, and when we vocally express our thoughts, constitutes our language—words, commensurate, in significance, and in respect to our consciousness, with our thoughts. If it be asked, how is that basis of silent, and of vocal articulation, of which we are conscious when we think, originated or produced? Here in turn, the querist may with propriety be asked, how is thought itself originated, or produced?—and how will he define what thought is abstractly from words?—and how does it happen that thoughts can be expressed in words? But while we can no more define what thought is, distinct and independent of words, than we can be conscious of thinking without at the same time being conscious of the words which, when silently or audibly articulated, express our thoughts, the supply of words answerable to all the thoughts of which we are conscious, is satisfactorily accounted for, by the fact that we previously learn the words, their forms, sounds, and meanings, and retain them in memory and subject to the power which we exercise in thinking. This is matter of uniform and universal experience, and as well with reference to adults as to children. There may be great variety in

the appropriation and use of words; but there is no conscious thinking without a previous knowledge of words competent to be the medium, and when articulated to express our every thought.

Such then is man's constitution that a knowledge and use of words is necessary to his exercise of the power of thinking. This feature of his mental constitution is, with reference to his social existence and relations, associated with his vocal organs, and his power of employing them in the audible enunciation of words, and also his power of visibly expressing them in writing.

Hence the necessity of teaching children the meaning of words in order to their exercising the power of thought; the sound of words in order to the vocal expression, and writing, in order to the visible representation of their thoughts.

Our primary knowledge begins with sensations; which require certain conditions of the bodily organs. But thinking, reasoning, reflection, are supersensuous, a product of the mind under appropriate conditions. The conditions may, in different individuals, exist imperfectly and in as different degrees as the power of thought is exercised by different persons. A deaf and blind mute may have other sensations than those which depend on sight and hearing; and in comparing, thinking, and reasoning upon them, may substitute some species of signs in place of words. But the variety and compass of his thoughts will necessarily be and without other helps, will ever continue to be, very limited. A merely deaf mute is at less disadvantage. A child who hears and sees, but is not taught the

meaning and sound of words, will remain a child in respect to his power of thinking. When a deaf mute is taught by signs and gestures as a substitute for the vocal utterance of words, the signs, like picture writing, hieroglyphics, and all arbitrary characters, are to him the instrument of thinking. They supply the place, and to their limited extent, fulfill the office of words, and the pupil's power of thinking keeps pace with his acquisitions.

These observations might be illustrated and confirmed in a variety of ways. Let it suffice at present to refer to the office and exercise of memory. It is the office of memory to retain and recall past thoughts. But as has already been remarked, such thoughts are remembered in the words which originally contained them. There is no distinct memory of past thoughts but in conjunction with the words belonging to them. If, as some may imagine, the mind has thoughts in infancy or advanced life, prior to its consciousness of any corresponding words or signs, such thoughts are not within the grasp of memory; and if they exist, they can not be reasoned from to invalidate what has been advanced respecting the thinking of which we are conscious, and which we remember by virtue of the words which are its vehicle.

*Words* are articulate vocal sounds—letters written or printed, which represent a sound, or combination of sounds. A *letter*, is a mark, or character, written, printed, engraved, or painted; used as the representative of a sound, or of an articulation of the human organs of speech. *Articulation*, is the forming of words by the human voice, uttering articulate sounds, distinct

syllables or words. To *speak*, is to express thoughts by words.

The faculty of uttering significant articulate sounds, of enunciating words by the voice as expressions of thought to others, is founded in the constitution of man; a faculty involving the concurrent action of physical organs and mental powers, like that of hearing and distinguishing vocal sounds by the ear, and that of seeing and discriminating the forms, dimensions, and colors, of external objects by the eye. Those significant articulate sounds which constitute words, and which when vocally uttered express thoughts, are to our consciousness of thinking or of the thoughts expressed, and to all distinct thoughts of which we are conscious, what visible objects, and audible sounds are to the sensations of seeing and hearing. They have the same relation to the faculty of thinking, which visible objects have to the faculty of seeing, and audible sounds to the faculty of hearing; insomuch that thinking can no more take place without words, than seeing where there are no visible objects, and hearing where there are no audible sounds. The power of thinking, considered simply as an intellectual power, is exercised by means of the instrumentality of words: as the power of visual perception is exercised by means of the eye, and that of auricular perception by means of the ear.

Hence *word* and *thought* often signify identically the same. 'The Lord put a word in Baalam's mouth. Take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in thy mouth. I will put my words in his mouth. The Lord said unto Jeremiah, Behold I have put my

words in thy mouth.' These and many similar passages of Scripture denote the communication of thoughts by inspiration in the words, by which the recipient was to express them. And since in all other instances of Divine Inspiration, equally with these a supernatural influence was requisite, there is nothing in the nature of the case, adverse to the belief that in every instance, words in conjunction with thoughts were inspired.

Language in the comprehensive sense above referred to, is, by the constitution of man, the means of realizing to his own intelligent consciousness, and of exhibiting to his fellow-men, precisely what his thoughts are; and in the latter particular sustains a relation to hearers and readers, somewhat similar to that which the works of creation and providence sustain as evidences of the Being, wisdom, and agency of the Creator and Ruler of the world. Each individual man is surrounded by other individuals, distinct from himself. His thoughts are made known to them by means of language spoken and written; and they are thus made known with the same precision as they are known to himself by consciousness. Words, when a man speaks or writes them truly to express what he is conscious of thinking, convey to the hearer or reader as exactly and perfectly what he thinks, as it exists in his own mind; and to that effect accordingly they are understood. This is not less true of all the words of a language when intelligently spoken, than it is universally admitted to be in respect to particular classes of words, such as the names of persons and things, and designations of qualities, acts, characteristics, and events.

Even when men deceive, the words which they employ to convey a falsehood or a lie, are as much the instrument of the thoughts which they express, as if they were not falsely intended. "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he—Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." By their words men are to be justified, and by their words they are to be condemned.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE.

THE question whether the gift of language was originally conferred on man by his Creator, or whether he was left to invent, and by slow degrees acquire the use of words, has been much discussed. The latter notion assumes that the first man was as an infant in respect to the power of thinking and expressing his thoughts; that the race continued long in ignorance and barbarism; and that at length, necessity led to the invention and use of language.

These assumptions are inconsistent with man's constitution, by which words are necessary to thought, with his primeval necessities, and with the inspired record. Such thinking as the invention of language implies presupposes, indeed, the actual knowledge and use of words. To his very first thought upon the subject, a coincident word must have been necessary, not only in order to his being conscious of it as a thought, but to his remembering it so as to combine it with a second. But being, from the moment of his creation, mature and perfect in other respects, it is impossible that he should have been as an infant in respect to his power of think-



ing and expressing his thoughts. His necessities as an adult required the immediate use of language; and accordingly, that the knowledge and use of words were imparted to him by his Creator at the outset of his existence, is rendered evident in the first and second chapters of Genesis; where, in immediate connection with the announcement of his creation, Divine commands are addressed to him, which, as appears from the context, he clearly understood; and where the record of his naming the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and his announcement concerning Eve, evince that he rightly understood the meaning and use of words. That the words by which he named the inferior creatures were inspired into his mind with the thoughts which they expressed, is indicated by the fact that the names which he gave them were significant of their natures or of their chief characteristics. In the third chapter, a knowledge of the meaning and use of words, both on the part of Adam and that of Eve, is shown by their answers to the interrogatories which were addressed to them; and in the fourth and ensuing chapters, the same knowledge and use is exhibited in respect to Cain and Abel, and to others succeeding them.

Adam was created, not an infant, but a man; and as such, doubtless, was as perfectly endowed with the gift of speech as with the other gifts of an adult, which qualified him for his station, relations, and responsibilities as a rational, social, and accountable being. The Scripture narrative, accordingly, represents him as speaking and acting as a man from the first; as speaking the same language as that employed by the Creator, in giving names to light and darkness, to the firma-

ment, the earth, the sea, and other visible objects, and in His commands and instructions to the primitive pair and their descendants. That language, therefore, which was so used prior to the creation of Adam, and was used by him and his successors, and was written by Job, and by Moses and the prophets, was not invented by man; and the sacred history shows that the progenitors of the race did not learn it by slow degrees like children, but were gifted with it from the first as perfectly as any of their descendants have been by gradual acquisition.

During the antediluvian period, and up to the date of the dispersion, "the whole earth was of one language and of one speech." The descendants of Noah had settled in Babylon, and probably in other countries distant from Canaan. In Egypt, which was contiguous to Canaan, the tongue of the Patriarchs would seem to have been continued; for when Abraham visited that country, Pharaoh and the people understood and spoke the same language with him. The same is implied also in the intercourse of Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and others with subsequent kings. Whether the Egyptians wrote the Hebrew language then, or at any period, is not now known. Job, however, who is supposed to have been contemporary with Abraham, wrote it, and in a style not inferior to that of Moses. Probably others did the same long anterior to the use of hieroglyphs; and it is certain that the Egyptians used alphabetic writing—the epistolic—contemporaneously with their use of hieroglyphs.

Prior to the dispersion, all the inhabitants of the earth were of one language and of one speech—literally, were

of one lip and one word—had one mode of articulation, and spoke the same words. The confusion of tongues which ensued was, probably, the effect of such a change in the articulation of the words previously common to them all, as to cause various and to different parties, unintelligible pronunciations. This, as the tribes and families were dispersed and “scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth,” would result in a diversity of languages, differing more or less widely from each other, in vocal sound, in orthography, and in the alphabetic letters, syllables, and words, or other chirographic characters. This would involve nothing like the origination of any new language; but only changes in that which preëxisted. Those who lived at the period of the dispersion knew the signification of the words previously in use, and either continued to use the same with a different pronunciation, or others in place of them with the same meaning, but so different in sound when spoken, and in orthography and chirographic characters when written, as to make it a different language, which, being taught to their children, would be perpetuated.

Thus the variety of languages which immediately ensued upon the dispersion would naturally result without the otherwise necessary lapse of years, or ages, for a new invention. The subsequent changes, like that from ancient to modern Greek, and from Latin to Italian, are not such as to require the supposition that any new or original language has ever been devised by man, And, accordingly, no historical notice exists of any people without a language, or of any people that originated one; though in every language particular

words are dropped from use, new words are introduced, and the signification of some words has undergone a partial or a total change. And it deserves to be remarked, as strongly implying the origin of all the different languages from one primitive stock, that the alphabets of the different nations not only resemble each other, but, for the most part, are the same with the Hebrew in respect to the order, power, and even the forms of the letters.

The fact that in all languages the letters are nearly the same, while the sounds are different, coincides with the supposition that the confusion of tongues resulted from a change of pronunciation.

There are some three thousand languages spoken on the earth, between which there is so much of resemblance and affinity as to induce the conclusion that they are all varieties of one original tongue. In orthoepy and orthography they greatly differ; and it is striking to observe to what an extent the difference in these respects is in accordance with the natural effects of climate, employments, and the predominant objects of thought. In the torrid zone, where the vocal organs are highly and uniformly flexible, the language is soft, melodious, and surcharged with vowels. In colder zones, and increasingly towards the polar regions, it is harsh and guttural. By the effect of climate, of exposure, of new employments, and of new objects of attention, it may well be supposed that the vocal organs and utterances of families and tribes that migrated in any direction at and after the dispersion recorded in Genesis, were sufficiently affected to account for the varieties not caused by that event.

The fact that foreign words are adopted and incorporated with our language is in evidence that words are simply the vehicle and representative of thought. For they are adopted not as signifying things, or as sounds to which we may assign a meaning, but solely for the sake of the thoughts which they convey. Hence, as nearly as possible, words entire, in their previous form and sound, are transferred by those who know the thoughts which they express, and who can not so soon or so well express the same thoughts by new-coined words of different form and sound. Thus, in our version of the Scriptures many Hebrew and Greek words are transferred, because they expressed thoughts which could not be perfectly conceived or expressed in any existing English words. Being transferred, and by usage being understood as conveying the thoughts which they expressed in the original tongues, it would be easy to show, and is indeed obvious, that no substitution of English, or other words, could now be made perfectly to express the same thoughts.

There is in Pritchard's *Physiology* a very forcible argument to show that the Hebrew was the parent of the Semitic tongues, and as compared with the other dialects of that family, and still more, as compared with the languages of the Japhetic and other races, exhibits proofs that it was not, as they evidently were, the growth of accidental and gradual accretion, that its very framework displays a deep conception and design, in its dissyllabic roots, of which the three consonants express the abstract meaning—the essential or leading sense or import, while all the relations of ideas to past and future time, to personal agency or passion, the pos-

sible or real, and even the differences of nouns and verbs, are denoted by changes in the interior vowels, which the words themselves were obviously intended in their original formation or construction to undergo : a contrivance which implies a conception and previous contemplation of all that words, when invented, can be thought capable of expressing !

Now since, from a comparison of the several ancient languages the inference is unavoidable that the Hebrew was the primeval tongue, and since that has in its structure certain proofs of perfection and of design which are wanting to the other tongues, and is free from the imperfections which characterize them, it is a just conclusion that the Hebrew was a gift to man at his creation, and not a product in any degree of his contrivance, or of that of any of his descendants.

The knowledge and use of words then, was imparted to the primitive pair as an endowment no less necessary to man as a thinking and social being, than light was to his seeing, and sound to his hearing. But since words, as the instruments of thinking, and vehicle of thought, consist of syllables and letters, the earliest writing is most likely to have been by means of alphabetic characters, as corresponding most perfectly to the sounds of letters and syllables and their combinations, to the organic succession of thoughts, and to the indispensable rules of grammar. Moreover, the primitive language, like other primeval endowments, may safely be presumed to have been perfect ; and therefore, as it was alphabetic, that the earliest chirographic representations of it, were made in alphabetic characters, which are in every respect more perfect than picture writing,

hieroglyphs, or unsyllabic marks. This, taking the Hebrew, in the absence of all evidence to the contrary, and all but positive demonstration in its favor, to have been the primeval tongue, is confirmed by the fact that all the proper names recorded by Moses as of antediluvian appropriation, are purely Hebraic; while the most ancient writings, those of Job, and Moses, are in the alphabetic characters of that language. And though imagined by some, to have been otherwise than copious in words, that language must be acknowledged to have been far more affluent and various than all the systems of picture writing, hieroglyphs, and unsyllabic marks put together; especially with reference to the great themes to which it is applied.

All the difficulties which philosophers and theorists have conjured up on this subject, are founded in the fanciful assumptions above mentioned—that the race was originally launched upon its career, in a condition of infantile ignorance and barbarism, and that the first step in the invention of language, was made, in some quarters, by picture writing, in others, by hieroglyphs, and in still others, by unsyllabic marks. The first of these assumptions, as has been shown, is at war with the Sacred Record. The others imply, what is absurd, that men in their efforts to invent language, attempted to communicate their thoughts to each other by pictures, hieroglyphs, and marks, before they conversed by vocally uttering their thoughts in words. Whereas it is not more certain that they think in words, than that they must possess words prior to such thinking as they aim to represent by pictures, hieroglyphs, and marks. But if they have words, and employ them as

the vehicle of their thoughts, they have the power which none ever failed to exercise, of expressing them by the voice in advance of any species of writing. And since words are alphabetic and syllabic, the first, most natural, and most perfect mode of representing them on paper, must needs have been by alphabetic characters.

In the nature of the case, therefore, picture writing is an evidence of the greatest paucity of words, and equally an evidence of extreme ignorance and degeneracy. Hieroglyphs and non-alphabetic marks, imply the same things in a less degree, and alphabetic characters in a far less degree than either. And that such was the course of things, and the relative place of these several methods, is evident from the facts, that the Mexicans were in the use of a spoken language contemporaneously with their use of pictures; that the Egyptians had a spoken language shortly after the dispersion, and prior, no doubt, to their use of hieroglyphs; and that the Chinese have a spoken, as well as a non-alphabetic written language. And it may, without hesitation, be concluded, that the Mexicans had recourse to pictures, and the Chinese to arbitrary marks, because of their ignorance of any alphabet; and that the Egyptians employed hieroglyphs either for the same reason, or for purposes of secrecy. For to suppose any race or class of people to have in use a spoken language, commensurate, as of course it would be, to all their thoughts, and then to suppose them to invent, as a means of recording their thoughts, a system of hieroglyphs which, according to the theory here opposed, stood for things and not for words, and which



on any view could have represented but a part of what was expressed in their articulate language, implies either that they had no knowledge of any alphabet, or that their object was concealment.

Language, as the instrument of thought, being an original gift from the Creator, and commensurate in copiousness and significance, with the thoughts to be expressed, and as perfect as the faculties of seeing and hearing, would doubtless have continued without change, had man continued in his primeval state. The scriptural is the only historical, and the only rational account we have of the occasion of its becoming corrupt. To the rebellious conduct of fallen man, the confusion of speech and the consequent variety of dissimilar tongues is directly ascribed; and to the depravity and wickedness of man all the perversions and corruptions of language are to be traced.

To the preceding observations concerning the origin of language, and the Hebrew as the primeval tongue, it is in point to refer to the knowledge and use of language by angelic beings. That those intelligences have the faculty of speech, is shown both in the Old and New Testaments, by numerous records of what they said. They spoke the same language as the men whom they addressed, or who heard their voices; and often concerning things not within their own experience or previous knowledge, and which required words which they could not have invented. The patriarchs, prophets, and others under the ancient dispensation, understood them. The language which they used, was the same with that which Moses spoke and wrote, in respect to vocal sounds, articulation, and significance.

He quotes their words, represents that their voices were heard, and their meaning understood. In the New Testament, their words are quoted in the Greek tongue, in which, in the Apocalypse, they are represented as uniting with the redeemed, and the unfallen hosts in heaven, in doxologies and hymns of praise. They were bearers of Divine messages to men, interpreters of prophetic symbols—see Daniel and Revelation—and exercised a ministry towards the heirs of salvation, which required the knowledge and use of words.

In every view of the case, it is plain, that had not language been a primeval gift, no intercourse could have taken place between man and his Creator, till the mute and helpless infant, forced by his physical necessities, had performed a transcendent and unrivalled wonder, by inventing words whereby both to give utterance to his own thoughts, and to receive divine instruction. But even then, the pressure of physical wants would not have prompted the invention of words for which he had no answerable thoughts—words expressive of what he was to believe concerning God, and what duties were required of him—words as necessarily to be inspired into his mind by the Author of his being, as the thoughts conveyed by revelation concerning things not within the observation of his senses. The fact, therefore, that Divine revelations are made in words, and convey thoughts which man is utterly incompetent to discover, demonstrates that language was not of man's invention.

The theories of Harris, (Hermes,) Monboddo, Astle, and others, who assume that man was as speechless as

an infant, till he invented a language for himself, accordingly involve, in respect to all the details of his progress, the most preposterous suppositions. For those theories, notwithstanding that they contemplate man as continuing in his infantile condition of ignorance and helplessness up to the time of his success in the invention of language, nevertheless suppose him to have foreseen the fitness and competency of words to enable him to distinguish different things and express different thoughts; which implies as much intelligence and discernment concerning the powers of letters, their organic formation, the combination of them in the formation of syllables, and of syllables in the formation of words, and all that belongs to the parts of speech and the relations of the words required to form intelligible sentences, as he would have after he had completed his invention; and, indeed, as much thinking and as real a knowledge of words beforehand, as it was the object of his invention to supply. But when the infant had invented letters, articulation, syllables, words, and grammar, he would have accomplished nothing to his purpose—according to these theories—till he had assembled a convention of all the infants of his time, to discuss what he had done and to agree on the meaning to be affixed to the respective words of his vocabulary. On the assumption that such a convention of mute imbeciles was held, to affix a meaning to sounds before they employed them as words, it might be reasonable to conclude that they would pass resolutions in the very terms employed by the writers above referred to—whose theories to that extent, may have a claim to be respected: such as, that “articulate voices

are the first advances towards the formation of language." And that, "It being difficult to convey new ideas by sounds alone, and man being by nature imitative, therefore, an invention of writing is necessary." And at that stage of their progress they would be likely to resolve that pictures would in the nature of things, be the most perfect kind of writing, because pictures would naturally stand for things themselves, and visibly represent them.

The notion that man commenced his career in an infantile state, and slowly groped his way to the use of speech, in a condition far inferior, as it must have been to that of animals, with their natural instincts, and their sensational language, has assisted to give a color of plausibility to the no less preposterous notion, that on account of his ignorance and barbarism, Divine revelations were so long deferred, and then given at intervals, as by his progress in knowledge and civilization he became prepared to receive them; a notion which implies that, until he had prepared himself by the invention of language, to receive a revelation, he had no moral character, and was subject to no moral government; that the Creator had no claims upon him as an accountable creature, and took no measures to instruct, assist, or restrain him. What the first revelations might have been upon this theory, or of what use they could have been till they embraced every thing essential to be known by man, in order to his faith and obedience, no one can tell. The bare statement of a supposition that the Creator made a revelation to the first man, or to any of his descendants, which did not convey the essential truths to be believed, and enjoin

the essential duties to be performed, is sufficient to refute it. Any thing short of that, would be as inconsistent with the character of the Being to be worshipped and obeyed, as with the relations, necessities, and duties of man. If as a creature naturally ignorant, yet rational and responsible, man needed a revelation, he needed it as urgently at the outset of his existence as at any later period ; and if there were reasons why the Divine goodness should at any period teach him what it was essential to him to know, and what he could not otherwise learn, those reasons must have been as imperative at the beginning, as at any subsequent stage of his existence.

Closely allied to the notion above referred to, that revelations from the Creator depended upon man's prior invention of language and improvement in civilization, is the no less absurd notion that man was left, in his natural state as a creature, to discover the doctrines and practise the duties of *natural* religion, as well as to invent a language. But whoever considers what natural religion is—that it involves right apprehensions of the nature and perfections of the Divine Being, and of our relations to Him, and to one another, and enjoins certain duties towards Him, our fellow-creatures, and ourselves, must be convinced that a discovery of its teachings implies omniscience as truly as any thing contained in the written Scriptures. Those teachings required not only to be correct, but to be authoritative, and to be comprehensive and ample enough for the guidance of men in their worship, in their social relations, and as subjects of the Divine Government. From the nature of the case, therefore, whether men were

originally ignorant and barbarous or not, the conclusion is unavoidable, that those teachings never originated with them, but were imparted by the omniscient Creator and Ruler of men. They accordingly comprise nothing which is not more clearly taught in the written Scriptures. Having been imparted to the progenitors of the race when called to act in their primeval relations, and having been, with many added truths concerning the fallen condition of the race, familiar to Noah and his contemporaries, they have been preserved even among pagans, with more or less distinctness, down to the present day. To those to whom the written Scriptures were not imparted, the truths of natural religion handed down by tradition from age to age, have, in proportion as they have been retained, formed the rule of natural conscience, and the sanction of natural law and government. The superadded and peculiar teachings of the written Scriptures, relate not to man in his original and natural state, but to his altered and peculiar character and exigencies as a fallen creature, and to the method of his recovery; so that they contain all the earlier oral revelations which belong to natural religion, and new revelations vouchsafed and written from time to time, as the dispensations of the redemptive scheme were carried forward.

If now we turn to the introductory portion of the written word, which records the creation of man and gives sketches of his history down to the exodus from Egypt, we find in those brief recitals the doctrines and injunctions of natural religion concerning God, and concerning man in his personal, social, and civil relations, clearly recognized and expressed, in connection

with doctrines and predictions superadded to the primeval and natural system, and relating to the method of his redemption. We find that Adam received oral instructions prior to his fall, and that after that event, further communications were made personally to him, to Abel, Enoch, Noah, and others; and that Abraham and other patriarchs were directly taught by the great Revealer, the peculiar truths of revealed, in distinction from natural religion, so that their faith was the same, and of like efficacy, with that of the apostles and followers of Christ.

The reason, therefore, why it was at sundry times, and in divers manners that God spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, and at a later period by His Son, the Scriptures as written in successive portions, was not founded in the nature or the primeval condition of man, his original ignorance, his defect of language, his barbarism, or in any thing concerning his progress from infancy to a mature and cultivated state and character. If a Divine Revelation was ever to be made to him, he was as capable of receiving it at one time as at any other; for doubtless He who made man's mouth, could put words into it at His pleasure. And if the first chapters of Genesis were inspired, it is past all question that Divine Revelations were made to him before, and to him and his descendants immediately, and from time to time, after the fall. The institutions of the Sabbath day, and of marriage, those concerning the means of subsistence, dominion over inferior creatures, the conditions of continued residence in Eden, the ritual of peculiar sacrifices and of acceptable faith, homage, and obedience—these were coëval

with the first days and years of man's existence. Indeed all such revelations, instructions, and institutions, were then known, as were requisite to the formation of some of the chief model characters of the Bible, as signalized and held up for imitation in the New Testament; as that of Abel, the second son of Adam, who "obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, and who being dead, yet speaketh;" that of Enoch, a prophet, the seventh from Adam, who "before his translation had this testimony, that he pleased God;" and that of Noah, the tenth from Adam, who walked with God, and was an "heir of the righteousness which is by faith."



## CHAPTER VI.

## THE NATURE AND REALITY OF INSPIRATION ILLUSTRATED BY REFERENCES TO THE SCRIPTURES.

BOTH the reality and nature of Inspiration are strikingly exhibited in the commencement of the sacred volume. Of the first chapter of Genesis, sixteen verses consist wholly or chiefly of what is recorded as having been spoken by the Creator; twelve verses relate what was done by Him, and the immediate effects of His acts; and the three remaining verses merely record the occurrence of the successive days. All the words of this chapter, equally with those of them which are declared to have been spoken by the Creator at the time, and as He proceeded with the work of creation, must have been inspired into the mind of Moses as he wrote them; for otherwise he could not possibly know what words had been so spoken, or what particular things were done, or what was the order and succession of the acts recorded. And if Adam, as the subsequent narrative implies, understood those words, the knowledge of them must have been conveyed to him by an immediate inspiration of thoughts in words. For twenty-seven of the verses relate to what was said and done prior to his

existence; so that no being but the Creator Himself could possibly, then or afterwards, impart to him or to others, a knowledge of the sounds, or of the meaning of those words. The three verses which succeed the twenty-seventh are expressly addressed to him, and must have been understood by him; for they command him to replenish and subdue the earth, and invest him with dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, and every living thing that moveth on the earth; and instruct him as to the herbs and fruits which he was to subsist on, and the herbs by which the inferior animals were to be sustained. They express not only the names of visible objects—as the earth, the sea, fish, fowls, animals, trees, herbs, seeds, etc., but various acts and conditions—blessing, fruitful, multiply, replenish, subdue, dominion over, living, moving, creeping, bearing, fruit, yielding, giving, life, living. Doubtless when he first heard the sound of these words he must have been enabled to comprehend the meaning of them in the connections and relations in which they are recorded. They were spoken to him immediately after he became a living soul. They prescribed to him what he was to do, and what relation he was to sustain to the inferior creation. He was created in the image of God, who announced before He created him that he should have dominion over all the earth with its teeming races. To suppose that the words were not audibly spoken, would be to deny the authenticity of the record. To suppose that he did not understand them, would be to impute folly to the Creator in speaking them. To suppose that the thoughts expressed were conveyed to him without the words, would be to con-

tradict that law by which rational creatures are conscious of thinking and communicating their thoughts to one another in words. But if the words were spoken, and if Adam understood them, then he did not invent the language, nor learn it by slow degrees like a child, but, as an adult of mature faculties, was endowed with a comprehensive and accurate knowledge of all the words uttered in his hearing, and all that he had from time to time occasion to use. The first words spoken to him by the Creator, undoubtedly conveyed a definite and intelligible meaning, which on hearing the vocal utterance, he could not mistake. In thinking of that meaning afterwards, he would necessarily think in the words which had been spoken; for if those were the first words uttered in his hearing, he could then have had no knowledge of other and equivalent words. The conveyance of the thoughts with the words into his mind must have been equivalent in effect and in respect to his faculties and his mode of receiving and being conscious of thoughts, to the conveyance of the same thoughts and words into the mind of Moses, by Inspiration.

Such accurate knowledge, on his part, of the sounds, meanings, and uses of words, is indubitably evident from the ensuing narrative, in the second and third chapters, where among other things, are recorded the apostasy of man and the consequences of it, which are attested by all history—the sin, which brought death, degradation, and misery in its train, and gave occasion to the subsequent revelations, to the work of redemption, and to the institutions of religion.

That Adam clearly understood the terms of the pro-

hibition which he transgressed, the meaning of the words spoken to him after his transgression, the curse pronounced upon the earth, the denunciation of sorrow, toil, and death upon himself, the reason of his expulsion from the garden, and the words which in his altered condition, he then employed for the first time, must undoubtedly be admitted, or the whole record must be rejected as a fable, and the historical and actual condition of the race must be regarded as an inexplicable mystery.

In like manner, in the fourth chapter, the words spoken by Jehovah to Cain, are shown to have been correctly understood by him, by the words which he uttered in reply; though from the peculiarity of the matters referred to, most of the words employed on the occasion, must have been spoken then for the first time.

It is reasonable to suppose that the earliest descendants of Adam were instructed by him in respect to the sounds and significations of all the words brought to his knowledge; and that as new subjects and occasions arose in the experience of particular individuals, demanding the use of new words, the requisite knowledge of them was imparted. This accordingly is indicated in numerous instances. Thus Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of times and events long future, "Saying," as quoted by Jude, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints," etc., using words, doubtless which he neither learned from his contemporaries, nor invented himself. Noah received particular verbal revelations concerning the Deluge and the Ark, in words for which there had been no previous occasion, but which he was enabled to under-

stand. So with Abraham, Moses, and the prophets. When Moses objected to being sent to Pharaoh to deliver the messages of Jehovah, that he was slow of speech and not a man of words, "Jehovah said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth?—go and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say—and thou shalt speak unto Aaron, and put words into his mouth, and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do—and thou shalt be to him instead of God." The method of revelations, and of imparting the knowledge of words, is thus illustrated. The verbal communications were to be made by Jehovah to Moses, and by Moses to Aaron.

Besides the great facts, doctrines, commands, promises, and predictions of the Bible which are expressed in the words of the Revealer, and together constitute the larger part of the inspired Scriptures, there are numerous instances of particular verbal directions respecting the conduct of individuals, classes, and communities of men, under novel circumstances, and when charged with new and peculiar duties. Thus, particular verbal directions were repeatedly given to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, David, and many others, which to a greater or less extent undoubtedly required words not previously known to them, but which it was necessary that they should comprehend. The entire ritual of the Levitical service was detailed to Moses in words, and by him written out for the guidance of the Priests, the Levites, and the congregation. All the details concerning the form, dimensions, materials, workmanship, and furniture of the Tabernacle, were in like manner verbally

expressed to Moses and written down by him. Those details involved the use of a great variety of new words; to understand which, so as to execute the several parts of the work, in exact conformity with the directions, 'wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, were imparted by the Spirit of God, to Bezaleel and Aholiab, in particular, and to every wise-hearted man, in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom,' to execute what was prescribed. At the close of these instructions—Exod. 25–31—Jehovah gave to Moses "two tables of stone, written with the finger of God." "The writing was the writing of God, graven upon the two tables."

That alphabetic writing was then in use among the Hebrews, and was understood by the people generally, may be gathered, not only from this example, in which the vocal sounds uttered from Mount Sinai in their hearing, were represented in writing on the Tables for general and permanent use, but from earlier notices. At the close of the laws and ordinances which were proclaimed from Sinai—Exod. 20–24—Moses, it is said, "wrote all the words of the Lord." In chap. 17: 14, The Lord said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in a book." The Signet of Judah, mentioned Gen. 38, was, doubtless, like other signets, engraved, and bore, at least, the initials of his name; by which its ownership was determined.—See Exod. 28 and 39. The expressions of Job, chap. 19: 23, 24: "Oh! that my words were now written—that they were graven with an iron pen—in the rock forever"—imply the use of writing in the patriarchal age, of which, indeed, the Book of Job itself is a notable evidence. And the

word translated *Book*, Gen. 5: 1, indicates by its use elsewhere, that the genealogy was recorded at the time referred to.

Again: the minute description 1 Chron. 28, of the temple to be erected by Solomon, and of the materials of all its furniture, is an instance of the introduction of new words by inspiration. David gave to Solomon the patterns of all that "he had by the Spirit, of the courts," and in "all this, said David"—after specifying the particulars—"the Lord made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern." Probably he immediately wrote down the details, as the Spirit inspired the words of the description into his mind and moved him to write.

These examples are in accordance with the earliest intimations in secular history respecting the use of words: namely, that they represented through the eye, when written, the vocal sounds audibly enunciated as expressions of thought. When a word was written, it was that to the eye which articulate sound was to the ear; and articulate sound was to the ear what the word unspoken was to the mind, as the instrument of thought.

Hence the order in which thinking, speaking, and the several kinds of writing succeeded each other. First: learning the sounds and meanings of words by hearing. Second: consciously thinking in words. Third: the articulate vocal utterance of words. Fourth: the writing of the words in alphabetic characters. Fifth: the representation of them by significant acts. Sixth: the representation of them by unsyllabic marks and hieroglyphs; and Seventh: by pictorial representations.

Man, as created, was perfect. But without the power of articulate speech, he would be no more perfect as an intelligent being, than animals would be without eyes and ears. His mind was so constituted that he can think; and his vocal organs were so constituted that he can speak. But he can no more think, except in words, than he can articulate intelligible words which express no thoughts. He was so constituted as to receive thoughts in words, by hearing, by reading, and by inspiration—to be conscious of them—to remember them—to express by vocal articulation the words received—to conceive thoughts in words, and by speaking and writing to convey them to others. But originally, as now, words were prerequisite to his conception of thoughts; his first words and thoughts, therefore, must have been imparted to him by inspiration.

When we open our eyes upon an object, a tree, for example, a perfect daguerreotype of it is depicted on the retina, with which the mind is in immediate contact. That reflected image is an indispensable condition of perception by sight. When we hear the name of the object there is an impression on the tympanum, equivalent in effect to the image on the retina. When, without seeing it or hearing its name, we think of the object, the intellectual conception is embodied in the word by which it is named—the articulate vocal sound which had vibrated on the ear. When we write or read the name, the same intellectual effect results as from the visual image on the retina, and the vocal articulation combined.

Thus the senses are organically instrumental to the cogitations of the intellect. But inasmuch as we are



not conscious of the image depicted on the retina, and therefore, though it be in immediate contact with the mind, we can not recall it by memory; and inasmuch as sight depends on the presence of light and of visible objects, which conditions are often wanting; it is not by that image that the intellect conceives thoughts, but by words, of which we are conscious, which we remember, and which, when we speak or write, convey our thoughts to others. The act of thinking, accordingly, both in adults and in children, involves a previous knowledge and recollection of words—words learned by oral or literary instruction, or received by inspiration—as the medium and instrument of thought. We see things indeed, but seeing is not thinking. We think of what we see in the words which describe it. When we see a new object—a plant or an animal—of which we neither know the nature nor the name, we think of it in words which assign it to some class or species, or words which describe it as unknown, and merely signify our ignorance.

Illustrations of the nature and reality of Divine Inspiration, similar to those which have been adduced, might easily be cited, were it deemed to be necessary, from every part of the writings of the Prophets and of the Apostles and Evangelists.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE WORDS OF SCRIPTURE INTO THE MINDS OF THE SACRED WRITERS EXPRESSLY TAUGHT BY THEM—THEIR STYLES AND IDIOMS—THE PERSONAL TEACHINGS OF MESSIAH THE GREAT REVEALER.

THE great commission of our Lord to His Apostles, enjoined them to teach to others only what He commanded. *Go ye and teach all nations—to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* (Matt. 28.) But He had inculcated and prescribed His doctrines and commands in words spoken to them; and what He now enjoins is equivalent to saying: Go and teach all nations all the words ye have heard from Me. Subsequently, John 14, He promised them that *the Holy Spirit should teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever He had spoken unto them.* But those things as spoken by Him included the words which He uttered, and could not be brought to their remembrance, or taught to others, disconnected from the words. To the like effect, He said on another occasion, John 12: *He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him. The Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day;*

which clearly implies, that the words as spoken by Him and understood by the people, correctly and perfectly expressed and conveyed to them His meaning, His thoughts, doctrines, commands: and equally, when His words, taught by the Holy Spirit, brought to their remembrance, inspired into their minds, and spoken, or written by them, and when as written they are preached by His ministers to the end of the world. Again, Luke 10, *He that heareth you heareth Me.* That is, he that heareth you, heareth My words spoken by you, which correctly express My thoughts. From all which we may gather, that whenever the Spirit inspired into the minds of the Apostles different words from those which are recorded as having been spoken by Christ to express the same thoughts, they are no less His words than if they had been so recorded. It was the office of the Holy Spirit to convey His words to them by inspiration. *When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth;* for He shall not speak of Himself, but *whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak.* (John 14.) Accordingly they were admonished, when persecuted and brought before magistrates—Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate, but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. *Mark 13.*—The Holy Ghost shall teach you, in the same hour, what ye ought to say. *Luke 12.*—It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you. *Matt. 10.*—I will give you a mouth and wisdom, etc. *Luke 21.*—The Holy Spirit was by their mouth to speak the words of God, as we elsewhere read, that *God hath*

*spoken by the mouth of all His Holy prophets since the world began.* (Acts 3. Luke 1.)

This inspiration of words was realized by the Apostles in preaching and testifying the Gospel. They spoke, not in words of their own selection, *not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth.* (1 Cor. 2.) This general declaration imports that the words which they spoke in preaching were on all occasions the words of God inspired into their minds. Thus, on the day of Pentecost, *they spake as the Spirit gave them utterance.* (Acts 2.) The things which had been spoken by Christ, and which were to be brought to their remembrance by the Spirit, must have been recalled by inspiration; for they were originally spoken in Syriac, whereas they were written, and therefore must have been inspired in Greek.

From the foregoing observations we gather that Inspiration comprised a correct conception of the meaning, the form, and the sound of the words in which the thoughts imparted were conveyed; the words being necessary to a consciousness of the thoughts, their sound to a vocal enunciation, and their form to a representation of them by writing.

Such, obviously, must have been the case with respect to prophecies, instructions, and announcements, when first imparted by inspiration. And such must necessarily have been the case with whatever was inspired and written or spoken; for the writers could not be conscious of the thoughts independently of the words, nor write the words without knowing their form, any more than they could speak them without

knowing their sound. Accordingly those upon whom the gift of tongues was bestowed, spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance, the words which were inspired into their minds, and of which they clearly understood the meaning and the sound. But their utterance of those words conveyed no thoughts to hearers of a different language, till they were interpreted into equivalent words of their language, of which they knew the meaning, the sound, and the form, so that they possessed them as the vehicle of the thoughts, and could speak them, write them, and recall them to remembrance. (1 Cor. 14.)

This view of the nature and mode of Inspiration, the process by which the Scriptures, the words written, were given by inspiration of God, obviates the objection sometimes made, that the difference between the style of one sacred writer from that of another implies that the respective penmen were left to select their own words. They were not all qualified by education and other endowments to comprehend, think, speak, and write in the same words; and therefore words suited to their education and capacity, words in which they could readily conceive, and be conscious of the thoughts intended to be expressed, were inspired into their minds; into some, words of an ornate and poetical cast, and into others the plainest and most simple words in common use. This objection, as is elsewhere observed, proceeds upon the groundless assumption that Inspiration is affirmed of the writers, instead of that which they wrote—the Scripture, the words written.

In respect to these particulars, there appears no ground of difference between the mode in which revela-

tions were made to men by inspiration, and the mode in which the knowledge of particular facts or truths is communicated by one man to another. Should a learned and eloquent man impart such knowledge to a man of similar learning and eloquence, he would employ words suited to his education and style of speaking; and if to a man of but ordinary gifts and attainments, he would employ only common and simple words. But he could not in either case impart such knowledge by conveying his thoughts into another's mind disconnected from their appropriate words, or visible signs equivalent to words. He must speak or write the words in which he thinks, by which he is conscious of the thoughts to be imparted, and by means of which they are retained in his memory. So a short but very important portion of the Scriptures, after having been audibly spoken to the whole congregation of Israel, was written on tablets of stone by the finger of God. A very large portion, comprising all that could not be discovered by man, and much besides which could not have been within the personal knowledge of the writers, is recorded in the very words which had been spoken by the Divine Revealer.

With respect to the diverse styles of the sacred penmen, it may be observed :

1. That the marked differences in their styles, correspond to the differences in the education, literary qualifications, employments, and habits of thought and expression, of the different writers. Some were priests, trained in the Levitical schools, and familiar with the sacred writings of their times, and with all the doctrines and services of their religion. Some were ex-

pressly educated to be prophets; others were magistrates and kings, endowed with the various knowledge and culture required by their official stations. And some were men taken from the secular walks of life, and furnished only with the ordinary education which their stations and pursuits required. Thus of the prophets, Amos was from among the herdmen. "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit." (Chap. 7.) And of the Evangelists, Matthew was a tax-gatherer, and Peter a fisherman. On the other hand, Moses was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt. David, Solomon, and Isaiah were amply endowed with various knowledge and with the gifts of eloquence and poetry, and Paul was skilled in the Greek and Hebrew learning of his day.

2. Those provisions in the constitution of man by which we think, are conscious of, and remember and express our thoughts, in words, imply that the same process takes place in the inspiration of Divine truths into the mind, as in the communication of divine or other truths from one human mind to another; that is, in conjunction with and by the instrumentality of words. The sacred writers were undoubtedly conscious of the thoughts which were inspired into their minds, and which they expressed in words by writing; and if the laws of the human mind, in respect to perception and consciousness, were not suspended by the inspiration of thoughts into their minds, they could have been conscious of the inspired thoughts only in words.

3. It was therefore necessary to their understanding

and comprehending the thoughts of which they were conscious, that they should be inspired in words which by their education, tastes, habits, employments, and official stations, were known and familiar to them ; for they could not intelligently comprehend and be conscious of the thoughts any farther than they understood and were conscious of the words.

4. Accordingly, there are similar differences in the styles of what is recorded by the different writers, as having been audibly spoken by the Divine Revealer, as in the styles of the historical narratives or other matter connected with what was spoken ; from which it is apparent that words equally within the knowledge and familiar use of the writers, were employed in both cases.

5. The reason, consequently, why the styles of the different writers, differ from each other, arises not from the fact that what they wrote was inspired, nor from the nature or mode of inspiration, nor yet from the nature of the subjects to which the inspired thoughts relate ; but wholly from the circumstance that the thoughts conveyed must necessarily be inspired in words familiar to the writers, because they could receive, understand, and be conscious of the inspired thoughts only in words which were previously known and familiar to them. Accordingly it happens, both in the prophets and the evangelists, that in some instances the same thoughts are expressed by different writers in different words, and in other instances in the same words. In short, conformably to the constitution of the mind and the laws of thought and consciousness, the same thing appears to have happened, so far



as the style is concerned, which would have taken place had the inspired thoughts been conveyed from one human being to another, or had they been the thoughts uninspired of the respective writers.

This may be illustrated by reference to the Gospels and the writers of them. 1st. There is satisfactory evidence that they were written at successive periods in the order in which they are now arranged. 2d. There is evidence, also, that the successive writers, after Matthew, were familiar with what their predecessors had written. 3d. Each Gospel contains many things not contained in either of the others, and omits many things as likely to have been known to the respective writers as those which they insert. 4th. The omissions and additions are alike indicative of the peculiarities of character, education, and pursuits or employments of the respective writers, and of the description of readers which they appear to have had immediately in view. Thus Matthew records what was peculiarly suitable to the Jews during the earliest period of the new dispensation; beginning with the genealogy of Jesus, the Christ, giving a minute account of his nativity, and of the ministry of John the Baptist; relating those acts and miracles of Christ which had been predicted of him, and quoting the prophecies of the previous dispensation, in proof of his Messiahship. At the same time, his marked Hebraic idioms, his grouping of kindred subjects together without regard to their chronological order, and other peculiarities, distinguish his style from that of the other Evangelists. Considering his personal character, therefore, and the immediate objects of the Gospel first to be

published, it is sufficiently obvious, that, out of the great mass of facts, discourses, miraculous cures, parables, narratives, and predictions which transpired, and were to be recorded by one or other of the Evangelists, those which were specially selected, and inspired into his mind, to be written by him, were such only as the occasion immediately required, and were inspired in words, idioms, and phrases, suitable to his peculiar habit and style of thinking.

Mark appears to have had more previous literary culture and various knowledge, than Matthew, and to have written with a view to Greek and other Gentile readers. His Gospel, while it contained the facts and doctrines essentially necessary to be known by such readers, supposing them to have been ignorant of its predecessor, had, for the Jews, the requisites of a supplement to Matthew's. It omits the genealogies, and certain of the parables and other matters which were of special significance to the Jews. While, on the other hand, it specifies individuals by their names, and explains many things more circumstantially and minutely than its precursor. Its style, as compared with that of Matthew, is precise, laconic, and abrupt.

Luke, the beloved physician, must be recognized as a Greek of an accurate, logical, and comprehensive mind, systematically trained in the learning of his time, and of his profession, and writing for his own class of Gentiles as well as for the readers of all time. The peculiarities of his style—writing as he did, not as a personal witness of what he relates, but as an historian—as well as of his topics, illustrations, and medical allusions, are, like the peculiarities of the subjects and style

of John, apparent to every reader as in striking contrast to what had been written by Matthew and Mark. Even where they severally mention the same events or sayings, there is often a different collocation of words, a greater or less degree of amplification or particularity, or a diversity in some other respect without disparagement of the scope and meaning of the thoughts expressed, yet plainly indicating that what each of them was inspired to write, was inspired into his mind in his own accustomed style and phraseology, and that the topics were selected by the Omniscient Spirit with reference to the immediate and special objects of the respective Gospels.

If what the Evangelists were to utter in their preaching, and when brought before magistrates, was to be in the words of the Holy Ghost speaking in them, how much more when they wrote for the infallible guidance of the faith and life of the Church in after ages? If when they preached and testified, the inspired words which they uttered were of their accustomed and familiar style, and therefore adapted to the usage and comprehension of their hearers, what wonder can there be that the same peculiarities of style should mark their writings? If the thoughts they were to express by vocal utterance were inspired into their minds in words already common and familiar, why should not the thoughts they were to express in writing be inspired into their minds in the same words? If the thoughts were inspired in *words*, which is the only inspiration indicated in the Scriptures, or which can be defined and shown to be consistent with the intelligent exercise and consciousness of men's minds, they must have been

inspired in words which, in style and idiom, were natural and familiar to the writers. And the significance of the foregoing interrogatories becomes pointed and resistless, when it is considered that the words of Christ Himself, as expressly quoted by the Evangelists, are marked by the same colloquial peculiarities as those which are recorded in immediate connection with them.

There was the same reason why the thoughts which were inspired into the minds of the sacred writers should be inspired in words and idioms to which, by education and habit, they were accustomed, as why they should be inspired in a tongue known to the respective penmen: and not in a tongue previously unknown both to them and to those for whom their writings were immediately intended; namely, that what they wrote might be immediately and perfectly understood. Had Jehovah spoken to the patriarchs, to Moses, to the children of Israel, and to the prophets, in any other than the words, phrases, and peculiar idioms in common use, he would have been but little, if any better, understood, than if he had spoken in a tongue foreign to his hearers: and so, also, had Christ spoken in any other than the colloquial phrase and manner in common use. It is a fact that the sacred oracles are written in such words of human and familiar use; and if that is supposed to constitute an objection to their plenary verbal inspiration, it is obviously a far stronger objection to a suggestive, supervisory, or other inspiration, which left the choice of words in any degree to the discretion of men. For in the one case the selection made by Omniscient Wisdom must

have been such as infallibly to convey the meaning: while in the other, as far as the writers exercised any discretion in the choice of words, there must be fallibility and uncertainty. To suppose them to have been so superintended as to insure their selection of the best possible words, those which would perfectly and infallibly convey the thoughts intended to be expressed, is to suppose nothing less than that the words which they wrote were inspired into their minds to convey to them the thoughts which they were to express in writing.

The penmen of the Holy Scriptures wrote what was inspired into their minds to be written. Their voluntary and responsible agency in the matter was simply that of penmen. What they wrote depended not on them, either in respect to the matter, its truth or its authority. They wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The Spirit spake by them. They wrote in their own characteristic styles, not merely because they were not competent voluntarily and intelligently to write in any other, but because, in order to their intelligent and voluntary agency in writing, and that what they wrote might be readily and correctly understood, the words, in the styles which characterize the compositions, were inspired into their minds. The thoughts were inspired in those words, in which they were conscious of the thoughts, and which, of necessity, therefore, they wrote.

Such plenary inspiration of the words which were spoken and written by the Apostles, is evident both from express declarations, and from the nature of their office. The power of working miracles was not the distinctive characteristic of their office. That power

was exercised on particular occasions, by men who were not apostles. It was, by the imposition of their hands, conferred on others. That which was peculiar to their office, and which distinguished them as Apostles, was, that invariably what they spoke and wrote was Divinely inspired and infallible as the rule of faith and life. Their teachings were, by virtue of this plenary and infallible inspiration, of the same binding authority on all churches and for all time, as if they had been audibly announced by their ascended Lord. Therefore they spoke and wrote not in words of man's wisdom or selection, but in the words which the Holy Ghost taught them. Nothing short of this—God speaking by them—could possibly render their teachings, commands, and decisions binding on the consciences of men. Nothing different from this could invest their words with Divine authority, and constitute them the infallible words of God.

It has been regarded by most writers as of extreme difficulty to account for it, that the thoughts which were previously known to the sacred writers, were inspired, or needed to be inspired, into their minds at the time when they recorded them; which must have taken place if all Scripture is given by inspiration. What necessity could there have been of a Divine inspiration of those thoughts into their minds, or of inspiring their minds to conceive those thoughts? If they were already conscious of them, what more could be necessary than that they should honestly commit them to writing? And if in respect to those thoughts a Divine inspiration took place, why were they inspired in the styles in which the writers were previously conscious of them?

This difficulty, we apprehend, arises altogether from an erroneous view of the nature and subject of inspiration; as if it were the writers, instead of what they wrote, that was inspired. They wrote that, and only that, which was inspired into their minds to be written; and equally, whether it was in part, or wholly, or in no degree, known to them before. They must have known innumerable things which they did not write; and things concerning the same subjects. It was not necessary to the ends to be answered by the Scriptures, that all the particulars known to them should be written. The Inspiring Spirit selected such as were necessary, omitting others. And in this He did precisely what He would have done, had none of the things been previously known to the writers, or within their personal observation and experience: as in the case of Moses, with respect to the entire retrospective history contained in Genesis—not one of the things comprised in that history could have been within his personal observation, or known to him, unless by oral tradition, and without absolute certainty. Nor can it be doubted but that folios might have been filled with other details upon the same subjects. What he records is but a brief selection inspired into his mind out of an indefinite mass of facts and details. But such a selection in either of the cases referred to is inconceivable, except by an inspiration of the selected thoughts into the minds of the writers. A miracle, indeed, may be imagined, by which they should forget all that they knew before, except the selected thoughts; but that would not suffice: it would not make it absolutely certain that the thoughts not forgotten were conceived correct-

ly and remembered perfectly by them; or that they were retained so as to be written in the necessary connection with each other.

The reason, in relation to others than themselves and their immediate constituents, why the Holy Spirit inspired into the minds of the sacred writers in their wonted styles, the thoughts with which they were previously familiar, was the same, no doubt, with that for which He inspired revealed thoughts which were not previously known to them, in the same styles, namely, because they were natural to the conceptions and modes of thinking and expression of mankind in all countries and all times. The written Scriptures were designed not peculiarly for the learned, but for all classes of men; of whom the unlearned are the vast majority. The simple language of ordinary life, of which the style and phraseology are as much alike as the necessities and the thoughts, was therefore necessary. To have rejected that and adopted any other style would have been to defeat the object of inspiration. The languages in common use among all nations, being in style substantially alike, a revelation, to answer its purpose, to be understood, to meet the common want, and to be translatable from "the originals into other tongues," must of necessity, with respect to one portion of its matter as well as of another, be inspired and written in the ordinary words, styles, and phrases of those who received and wrote it.

The same course of remark as that above concerning the selection of thoughts out of the mass of what was previously known to the sacred writers, is in like manner applicable to the selection of historical facts



and genealogies, in different canonical books, from other works then extant which were not received into the canon. In the books of Kings, for instance, "the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah," and that of "the Kings of Israel," are frequently mentioned as containing "the rest of the acts," of successive kings—the acts, namely, which were not selected for insertion in the Inspired Scriptures. Solomon spake three thousand proverbs, and his Songs were a thousand and five. Of his Proverbs, a portion only are selected; and but two of the Psalms are ascribed to him. The acts of David are said to be written "in the book of Samuel, the book of Nathan, and the book of Gad;" and the acts of Solomon "in the book of Nathan, the prophecy of Ahijah, and in the visions of Iddo:" from which sources, doubtless, particular selections were inspired. "All Israel were reckoned by genealogies; and behold they were written in the book of the Kings of Israel and Judah." (1 Chron. 9.) From those records the genealogies in this book of Scripture were selected.

The prophets wrote what was expressly inspired into their minds to be written. Out of all the materials of Jewish history, public and private, the Divine wisdom required certain things to be written—certain things which had been recorded in the secular annals or national chronicles of the kings; while many other things in those records were omitted; and certain things also from the private personal history of individuals. The particulars so selected, were in the view of Omniscience, necessary to be contained in the authoritative Book of Scripture; and as matters of fact, actual events, a true report of what was said and done,

whether in itself right or wrong, were inspired into the minds of the prophets to be written. As so written they are the words of God, as they constitute a record of real facts and events in words inspired by Him.

Those who object to the idea that the words of Scripture were inspired with the thoughts, regard it as especially preposterous to suppose that the order and grammatical arrangement of the words were Divinely prescribed. But surely a little consideration must convince every one: 1st. That whatever thoughts were inspired into a prophet's mind, must have been couched in words, in order to be consciously received by him. And if every one does not perceive the absolute necessity of this in every possible instance, all must admit that necessity in a vast multitude of cases where no fitting words were previously known to the Prophets; and in other cases where a choice by the sacred penmen from among a diversity of words was impossible—as in proper names, numbers, proportions, qualities, dates, affirmations, negations, and the like. 2d. That the thoughts could not possibly, in any case, be intelligibly conveyed otherwise than in a due and orderly succession—that succession which is exhibited in the due collocation and grammatical arrangement of the words when written. 3d. That such orderly succession and grammatical arrangement of the words of the sacred text was as necessary to be prescribed as the words themselves, or as the thoughts which they expressed: for in no possible case perhaps, or not in one out of a thousand instances, would a different order and arrangement of the words of the text convey precisely the same meaning as that which was adopted.

In most cases the meaning would be materially affected by a change in the collocations and relations of the words. In many cases the meaning would be wholly different; and in every instance the slightest change would modify or obscure the sense. The object of a particular collocation and grammatical arrangement of the words of a sentence is to convey intelligibly and perfectly the thoughts and shades of thought intended to be expressed. And accordingly there are, in the nature and structure of language, the several parts of speech, and the varieties of change in respect to person, number, case, mode, tense, and other requisites to the expression of every variety and shade of thought. To these, in the selection and collocation of words in spoken or written sentences, particular attention is indispensable.

Suppose, for example, that two men were equally familiar with the facts relating to a particular subject—the biography of an individual; that the details of such biography fully written out would fill a massive folio; that a selection from the mass of materials might be comprised in a thin octavo; and that in order to produce such an abridgment, one of them should act as penman while the other dictated the words to be written; the result obviously would be a work expressing the thoughts of the party dictating, and in the words selected and collocated by him. The writer would have no agency, either in the selection of the thoughts, or in the selection or the arrangement of the words. To suppose him to write other words in place of those dictated, or to change the collocation of the words, would be to suppose him to be guilty of treachery and falsehood.

When connected thoughts are conveyed by inspiration, as when conveyed by vocal sounds, or written characters, they must necessarily be adjusted conformably to the laws and habits of the mind that is to receive and be rendered conscious of them. Such adjustment is as necessary to intelligible speech, and to the intelligent reception of thoughts, however conveyed, as a due succession of notes in instrumental music, and is, by practice, rendered as easy and spontaneous in the one case as in the other. "There are innumerable motions of the fingers upon the stops or keys of an instrument, which must be directed in one particular train or succession. There is only one arrangement of those motions that is right, while there are ten thousand that are wrong, and would spoil the music. The musician thinks not in the least of the arrangement of those motions; he has a distinct idea of the tune, and wills to play it. The motions of the fingers arrange themselves so as to answer his intention. In like manner when a man speaks upon a subject with which he is acquainted, there is a certain arrangement of his thoughts and words necessary to make his discourse sensible, pertinent, and grammatical. In every sentence, there are more rules of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, that may be transgressed, than there are words and letters. He speaks without thinking of any of those rules, and yet observes them all, as if they were all in his eye." (Reid, Essay IV.) Doubtless the constitution, laws, and habits of the human mind, render such precision of arrangement as necessary in the case of inspired, as in that of uninspired thoughts and words.

The inspiration which is affirmed of the Scriptures—that of words with the thoughts represented by them—is in harmony with our intellectual constitution, and with those laws conformably to which we think, are conscious of our thoughts, and remember and express them. We are constituted to think in words, to receive thoughts by hearing and by reading words, to express them by articulating words; and in like manner to receive thoughts by the inspiration of words. The miracle of Divine Inspiration does not contravene the laws of our intellectual being. It conveys intelligence to the mind in words of which the recipient becomes conscious by the inspiration of them, whether with or without the adventitious circumstance of an audible utterance of the words by the inspirer, or that of causing intellectual visions or dreams. That the intelligence is conveyed in words of which the mind is rendered conscious, in accordance with the laws by which it becomes conscious of all other thoughts as they are conceived in words, and as they are heard when spoken, and read when written, is evident from the fact, that the sacred penmen when receiving by inspiration what they were moved and commanded to speak and write, were in a state perfectly to apprehend the meaning of the words inspired, to be conscious of them, to remember them, and to commit them to writing. In all but one particular the process appears to be identical with that by which, in the ordinary exercise of our intellectual and physical organs, we receive intelligence in words, from one another; the exception being, that revealed intelligence in words, the Holy Scriptures, the words of God, were inspired into the mind of the

recipient, not at his will, or by the will or agency of any other creature, but immediately by the omniscient Creator, Lawgiver, and Judge of men; and therefore they are His words, and involve His infinite authority. The too common practice of referring to the different books of the sacred canon, as if the writers were the sole, or the responsible, authors of them, and of quoting Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles, as teaching this or that, is neither countenanced by the Scriptures themselves, nor consistent with their claims. The several writers were authors in no higher sense, than that of being penmen of words inspired into their minds—words, indeed, of which, when inspired, they were intelligently conscious, but which were not of their selection. And accordingly when reference is made in Scripture to what was written by particular persons, especially when the reference is made to particular facts or doctrines, it is introduced by phraseology, like the following: “Thus saith the Lord;” “Men and brethren, this *Scripture* must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas.” (Acts 1. See also 4 : 24 ; 7 : 6, etc.)

The fact that the inspiration by which the Scriptures were given, conveyed into the minds of the sacred writers the words they were to inscribe, and, so far as the words were conveyed by an audible voice, in a manner analogous to that in which men convey intelligence to one another, by articulate vocal expressions, is illustrated by the familiar personal intercourse and conversation of the Great Revealer, with patriarchs and prophets before, and with His apostles after, his incarnation, and by the collocation of His words with those

of men in the sacred narratives. He who is the one only Mediator between God and man, who came down from heaven and took man's nature into union with His person—the image, representative, Revealer, Word of God, as really exercised His mediatorial office under the ancient as He does under the present dispensation. He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. By Him, and to subserve His purposes of manifestation, providence, and grace, all things in heaven and earth were created and are upheld and governed. In His official Person, and in the similitude of His human nature, He appeared visibly to the first parents of the race, to the patriarchs, to Moses, and to the prophets, and instructed and conversed with them in their accustomed language. Under one or other of His titles as recorded by Moses, He was recognized and worshipped by them, as Creator, moral and providential Ruler, and mediatorial Administrator in all the relations of God to the human race. In His visible appearances, particularly, He was announced as *Malach Jehovah*, the *Messenger Jehovah*—the official mediatorial Person, as designated, anointed, and sent of the Father—not as *the* angel or *an* angel of Jehovah, according to the Massoretic construction. In this representative character He administered the visible theocracy, conducted the children of Israel out of Egypt, gave the Law at Sinai, prescribed the Levitical services, talked with Moses, and spoke to all the prophets since the world began. When He became incarnate, He associated familiarly with His disciples, instructed them, conversed with them, and referred them to the oracles as testified in *John*. “Search the *Scriptures*”

for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me. Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me. Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself. These are the *words* which I spoke unto you—that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures.”

In these and in all similar references, both by Him and by the Apostles, it is evident that the *words* of the sacred oracles infallibly expressed the thoughts of the Revealer who inspired them. On that fact His own integrity, the authority of His mission, and the salvation and eternal life of His hearers depended. He spoke and conveyed His thoughts to them in the same manner as they spoke and conveyed their thoughts to Him and to one another, and there is the same evidence that they understood and received His thoughts, that there is that He understood and received theirs. Both His and their words, of question and answer, being inspired into the minds of the sacred penmen, are written as a part of Scripture, and are interspersed in the narratives of events. In numerous instances of His personal appearance during the ancient dispensation under the various designations, the occasion required His position, and the influence of His giving instructions and commands to particular persons, or in contrast with other events. On the words chosen by him, and the things which were deduced as alike



conveying the thoughts of the speakers. Evidently the words spoken were alike vocally articulated, and were employed according to their received signification. Thus among the instances of His appearance and conversation with Abraham, that recorded Gen. 18, may be referred to, when he announced His purpose to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. He revealed His otherwise inscrutable purpose, in the words which He spoke. It nearly concerned the relatives of the Patriarch; and the colloquy which ensued demonstrates by its import and by the particulars referred to, that the words employed conveyed perfectly and in one and the same way, the thoughts of the respective parties. So His appearance to Moses in the burning bush, and the continuance of it in the cloudy pillar, during the journeyings of the Israelites for forty years, was attended by a succession of new and peculiar revelations intimately connected with the circumstances, and with the civil and religious interests and agency of the tribes, the record of which by Moses shows indubitably that the thoughts of the several speakers were conveyed in the same way and with equal precision, by their words. It was at His command, and under His eye, that Moses wrote, and deposited the writings, under His sanction, in the side of the Ark of the Covenant. Instead of citing particular instances of His personally speaking to Moses and directing him as His servant in all that was done, each chapter and paragraph of the four last books of the Pentateuch must be referred to.

In his administration of the ancient economy—the visible Theocracy—he exercised the offices of Prophet,

Priest, and King, and of necessity gave verbal directions to magistrates, prophets, and all in every relation who were subject to him. On the death of Moses, "Jehovah spake unto Joshua"—directed him to enter the promised land, and to observe the law, and not to turn from it to the right hand or to the left. "As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein." (Josh. 1.) After the passage of the Jordan, He who appeared to Moses in the bush, appeared to Joshua in the form of a man, with a drawn sword in his hand, and said: "See, I have given into thine hand Jericho." (Josh. 5.) Subsequently, He gave him express verbal directions in every emergency. At the close of his career, the people covenanted to serve Jehovah and to obey His voice, "and Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God," and he set up a stone as a memorial, "and said unto all the people, Behold this stone shall be a witness unto us; for *it hath heard all the words of the Lord*, which he spake unto us." (Josh. 24.) This very significant act implied the utmost regard for all the words which Jehovah had spoken, and which were written to express and perpetuate His thoughts to all generations.

From the death of Joshua to the reign of Saul, the history is fraught with visible manifestations, miraculous interpositions, and specific verbal directions. At the commencement of that period "the children of Israel asked the Lord, saying: Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?

And the Lord said, Judah shall go up, and the Lord was with Judah." (Judges 1.)

The tribes having failed to extirpate idolatry, and rebuke and alarm being necessary to them, "The Messenger Jehovah came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: 'I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you into the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said I will never break my covenant, but ye have not obeyed my voice. Why have ye done this?'" "And it came to pass when the Messenger Jehovah spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice and wept." (Chap. 2.) The poignant words which He uttered on that occasion, like those announced from Sinai, affected the people at the time; but their apostasy to idolatry which had already begun, was not arrested, and a series of calamities ensued.

When oppressed by the Midianites, "The Lord sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, who said unto them: 'Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage, but ye have not obeyed my voice.'" "And the Messenger Jehovah appeared unto Gideon, and said unto him: 'The Lord is with thee.'" Gideon saw Him "face to face," and received from Him minute verbal instructions, commands, and answers to his requests, confirmed by miracle, during the events which ensued. The passages which were audibly spoken, are of such import, and occur in such connections, as to demonstrate that the penman of the narrative must have written the precise words which were uttered; which, therefore, must have been inspired into his mind

with the other words of the composition. (Judges 6: 7, 8.)

On the occasion of raising up Jephtha as His instrument in delivering the children of Israel from the Ammonites, after they had "cried unto Him, saying, We have sinned against thee," "the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians?" In the subsequent recital Jehovah is appealed to as the witness and arbiter of events. "The Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephtha; and the Lord delivered the Ammonites into his hands." (Judges 10: 11.)

To provide a Nazarite through whom His miraculous power should be exhibited against the Philistines, the Messenger Jehovah appeared to Manoah and his wife, promised them a son, and gave particular directions concerning him; which special announcements on His part, and their replies, are doubtless recorded in the original words. (Judges 13.)

Prior to the war upon the tribe of Benjamin, the children of Israel "asked counsel of God, and said, Which of us shall go up first to the battle—and Jehovah said, Judah shall go up first." After the first, and also after the second battle, in which many of them were slain, they fasted and worshipped, and "inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I yet go out to battle against the children of Benjamin, or shall I cease? And the Lord said, Go up; for to-morrow I will deliver them into thine hand." (Judges 20.) In this and in other instances, the record of the *words* of Jehovah, in connection with that of the extraordinary agencies and events by which they were fulfilled, leaves no room for

any other conclusion than that the words in both instances were inspired into the minds of the writers.

In the history of Samuel, in repeated instances, the words spoken to him by Jehovah, are so interwoven with the events narrated, and often so essential as predicting or forming the basis of them, as to imply that all the words of the record were equally inspired, and equally employed in their ordinary signification.

Thus the prediction, chap. 3d, concerning the house of Eli: "And the Lord said to Samuel, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house." The next ensuing chapters record the extraordinary events by which this was accomplished.

When the people desired a king, "the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." "Yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them. And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king. And Samuel heard all the words of the people," in answer to his description of the king, "and he rehearsed them in the ears of the Lord." (Chap. 8.) Next follows the record of what preceded the anointing of Saul to be king. "Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear, a day before Saul came, To-morrow, about this time, I will send thee a man out of the tribe of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him. And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said unto him, Behold the man whom

I spake to thee of." Having anointed him, he described to him the incidents he should meet with on his way home, all of which "came to pass that day." "And Samuel called the people together unto the Lord," that is, to the tabernacle in which His presence was manifested, and said: "Present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes." When Saul of the tribe of Benjamin had been taken, "he could not be found. Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered, Behold he hath hid himself among the stuff. And they fetched him thence; and Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen. Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord." (Chap. 9 : 10.)

In the 12th chapter, Samuel briefly rehearses to the people the events of preceding years, and the righteous acts of Jehovah to them and their fathers; in which he quotes the words which had been spoken on particular occasions.

From the structure and scope of the history of Joshua and the Judges—the narrative being made up of the words spoken by Jehovah, those spoken by the principal actors in the scenes described, and the acts and events to which the quoted words relate, in their natural and chronological connection with each other—the inference is unavoidable, that all the words as written, were used according to their ordinary and well-understood signification, and were all alike inspired into the minds of the sacred penmen. This inference, indeed, could not be more obvious or more striking

were all the words of the history recorded as having been audibly spoken. In the progress of the history there are prophetic passages intermixed with the narrative of passing events. The triumphal Song of Deborah, and the Song of Hannah, like that of Moses at the Red Sea, and that near the close of his ministry, from all which quotations are made elsewhere in Scripture, were without doubt verbally inspired. And throughout the narratives in question, the relation of the words which were spoken, to those collocated in connection with them, and the perfect congruity and consistency between them, render it incredible and absurd to suppose that some of the sentences and parts of sentences which are written were verbally inspired, and that the rest were left to the discretion of the writers.

To the history of David a very brief notice only is requisite; while that of the subsequent kings is sufficiently referred to in what relate to the prophets. In his last words, David himself says: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue." (2 Sam. 23.) The passages in his history in which Jehovah is represented as speaking to him directly and through His prophets, directing his conduct, and hearing and answering his requests, are too numerous to be specified. His Psalms bear indubitable marks of verbal inspiration. Their inspired and canonical authority are abundantly recognized and attested in the New Testament, both by the Saviour and the Apostles. They are in a large degree prophetic; and in many of them, in one official relation or another, the Messiah

spoke by him of his future humiliation, sufferings, triumph, and reign.

The Books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel consist almost wholly of passages which are introduced by such formulas, as "Thus saith the Lord—The word of the Lord came unto me saying—The Lord said unto me—The Lord spake, said, or hath spoken—Speak Thou, say Thou," etc., which occur some seven hundred times, as introductory to successive paragraphs.

The Book of Daniel in its prophetic announcements, its record of miraculous interpositions, and its historical details, is fraught with evidence of its verbal inspiration.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream concerning the four consecutive kingdoms, is a striking instance. His thoughts came into his mind upon his bed, what should come to pass thereafter; but having forgotten their vehicle, he retained no distinct remembrance of them. His spirit was troubled. He summoned the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers, but they confessed their utter inability to tell him what he had dreamed. The God of heaven, who revealeth secrets, revealed this secret to Daniel in a night vision. When, in the words which were inspired into his mind, he expressed the thoughts which Nebuchadnezzar in his dream had conceived in the same words, the king remembered, and was so conscious of them as the same words, that he fell on his face, and said to Daniel: "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a Revealer of secrets." (Dan. 2.) Instances equally decisive of verbal inspiration are exhibited in the prophecies which were conveyed to him, and in his



record of the verbal interpretations which were expressed by the angel Gabriel.

The lesser prophets all expressly signify that what they wrote was the Word of Jehovah. Thus: "The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea.—Then said the Lord unto me—Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel."—"The word of the Lord that came to Joel"—"The words of Amos, which he saw concerning Israel—Thus saith the Lord—Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you—Hear thou the word of the Lord."—"The vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord God"—"The word of the Lord came unto Jonah—The word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time."—"The word of the Lord that came to Micah—Thus saith the Lord—Hear now what the Lord saith"—"The book of the vision of Naham—Thus saith the Lord."—"The burden which Habbakuk saw—The Lord said, Write the vision and make it plain upon tables—O Lord, I have heard Thy speech and was afraid."—"The Word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah"—"Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet—Then spake Haggai, the Lord's messenger, in the Lord's message unto the people, saying—Thus saith the Lord of Hosts—Again the word of the Lord came unto Haggai"—"In the eighth month came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah the prophet, saying—In the eleventh month came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah, saying—Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me saying—Thus saith the Lord of Hosts," etc—"The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi."

Thus nearly the whole of the writings of Moses, the

Psalmists, and the Prophets, consist of words declared to have been spoken by Jehovah, to the writers, and words spoken by men whom the writers expressly mention ; which words are so collocated and intermingled with such other words as were necessary to the progress of the narrative, as to demonstrate that they were all inspired into the minds of the writers. Thus "God at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets"—and in later days, "by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and by whom He made the worlds."—"Holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."—"All Scripture was given by Inspiration of God."

Of the prophets to whom he spoke, near fifty in number are mentioned by name, or otherwise personally referred to ; besides whom a succession of High Priests received responses from the Sacred Oracle. A citation of some incidental references to them, is due to the subject. "The Lord heard the voice of Elijah ; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived ; and Elijah delivered him to his mother. And she said to him, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that *the word of the Lord in thy mouth, is truth.*" (1 Kings 17.) "And *the Lord spake* by His servants the prophets, saying," (2 Kings 21 : 10.) "And the Lord sent against Jehoiakim bands of Chaldees, according to *the word of the Lord which He spake* by His servants the prophets." (2 Kings 24 : 2.) "Many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by *Thy Spirit in Thy prophets.*" (Neh. 9 : 30.) "Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have even

sent unto you all My servants the prophets—*yet they hearkened not unto Me.*" (Jer. 7 : 25.) "The Lord hath sent unto you all His servants the prophets, yet ye have not hearkened unto *Me*, saith the Lord ; ye have not heard *My words.*" (Jer. 25 : 4, 7, 8.) "Because they have not hearkened to *My words*, saith the Lord, which I sent unto them by My servants the prophets." (Jer. 29 : 19.) "Thus saith the Lord God : Art thou he of whom *I have spoken* in old time by My servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days, many years, that I would bring thee against them?" (Ezek. 38 : 17.) "Neither have we obeyed *the voice of the Lord our God*, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets." (Dan. 9 : 10.) "*I have also spoken* by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets." (Hosea 12 : 10.) "Surely the Lord God will do nothing but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets—The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy." (Amos 3 : 7.) "Should ye not hear the words which *the Lord hath cried* by the former prophets?" (Zech. 7 : 7,) "the words which *the Lord of Hosts* hath sent in His Spirit by the former prophets?" (Verse 12.) "As *He spake* by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began." (Luke 1 : 70.) "They have Moses and the prophets—let them hear them ; if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." (Luke 16.) "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken—Beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, He expounded unto them, in all the Scriptures, the

things concerning Himself" (Luke 24.) "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth." (John 1.) "Those things which *God before had showed* by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled. All the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." (Acts 3.) "To Him give all the prophets witness." (Acts 10.) "Believing all things which are written in the Law and in the prophets." (Acts 24.) "Witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." (Acts 26.) "Persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses, and out of the prophets." (Acts 28.) "The *Gospel of God*, which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures." (Rom. 1.) "The righteousness of God, without the Law, is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the prophets." (Rom. 3.) "But now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets." (Rom. 16.) "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." (Eph. 2.) "Take my brethren the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example." (James 5.) "That in the days of the voice of the seventh Angel, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets." (Rev. 10.)

These, and all similar testimonies, proceed upon the certainty that the words which the prophets wrote, were the words of God, and that they were understood

in the days of the evangelists and apostles, precisely as they were when originally inspired and written. The Scriptures accordingly claim to be the Word of God. They claim to be infallible and imperishable. The word of the Lord endureth forever. Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled. My words shall not pass away. The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. The counsel of the Lord standeth forever; the thoughts of His heart, to all generations.

Again, if reference be made to particular classes of passages, the conclusion is unavoidable, that they are word for word as they were audibly spoken by Jehovah to the Sacred Penmen, or verbally inspired into their minds by the Holy Spirit. As, 1st. The confessions, supplications, deprecations, fears, hopes, prayers, thanksgivings, praises, joys, sorrows, of holy men. 2d. All prophetic passages, and all notices of their fulfillment. 3d. All narratives of miraculous interpositions, and the occasions and consequences of them. 4th. All recitals of the infliction of judgments and calamities upon individuals and nations, and the circumstances, reasons, and results of them; as in the case of the Deluge, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues of Egypt, the curse pronounced upon the whole race in their first parents, that inflicted upon Cain, that upon Ham and his descendants, that upon Achan, and others, in every period of the Theocratic rule. 5. All descriptions and denunciations of Idolatry, and of other crimes and abominations; all biogra-

phical notices of individuals, good and bad; all statements of their motives, acts, virtues, and crimes; all statements relating to angels, good and bad, to Satan, to the invisible world, to heaven, to the place of retribution, to time, and to eternity.

The words of Scripture must necessarily be the infallible words of God, if they involve His authority in any degree. For they express His thoughts, His purposes, counsels, covenants, laws, promises. They describe his acts, as Creator, Ruler, and Redeemer, express the rules by which He deals with men, and the grounds and reasons of His conduct. They relate to the execution of one comprehensive plan, which involves His glory and the well-being of the universe. They prescribe the conduct of men in their relations as accountable and immortal creatures. They relate to the events of time, and to the retributions of eternity. On obedience to them, life and death are suspended. "Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do all the words of this Law."—"I have set before thee this day, life and good, and death and evil, in that I command thee to love the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, and His statutes, and His judgments, that thou mayest live." (Deut.)

The historical, as well as the didactic and prophetic parts of the Scriptures, relate to covenants which were sanctioned by the oath of Jehovah, and the fulfillment of which involves the agency and destiny of men; to a particular covenant which is everlasting, and is ordered in all things and sure; and to promises which,

as yet, are but partially fulfilled. Hence the homogeneity and consistency of the several parts, though written at different periods; and the fact that they contain not a single expression inconsistent with their claim of plenary verbal inspiration. They had one omniscient and immutable Author, who alone comprehended the details of His plan, and the natures and relations of all things, and, therefore, could determine what should be inspired and written. His whole procedure in the creation and government of the world and of the universe, is a manifestation of Himself, of His perfections, prerogatives, and rights on the one hand, and of the natures, dispositions, and conduct of creatures on the other. The words which He has inspired, relate to things comprised in this scheme of manifestation, and are as infallible expressions of His thoughts, as His works are of His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. Hence the transactions and events which are mentioned in Scripture, are represented to be according to His word, or fulfillments of His word. "Christ died and was buried, and rose again, according to the Scriptures.—The Scriptures must be fulfilled.—The Scripture can not be broken.—The Scripture saith unto Pharaoh: Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.—Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God."

In all that relates to His own acts and purposes, all that relates to His moral laws, commands, precepts, and prohibitions—all that relates to the work of redemption, to the Church, and to the future state, and equally,

in all things connected with these, His words must be as infallible as He Himself is. Accordingly all good is bestowed in fulfillment of His words of promise and grace; and all evils are inflicted for disobedience to His words.

Again, the words of Scripture, are the sword of the Spirit in changing men from darkness to light, subduing their wills, enlightening and sanctifying them; and they are the words through which faith is exercised by men. "The sword of the Spirit is the word of God." "The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation." (*Catechism.*) "The word of God is quick and powerful, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Rom. 8.) "Except a man be born of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God.—It is the Spirit that quickeneth—the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.—Of His own will begat He us with the *word* of truth.—Now ye are clean through the *word* which I have spoken unto you.—Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the *word* of God.—The righteousness which is of faith, speaketh on this wise—The *word* is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thine heart: that is the *word* of faith which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart, man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation."—"Justifying Faith



is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and word of God," etc. (*Ass. Catechism.*) "The seed is the *word* of God—the sower soweth the *word*—they that hear and keep it, bring forth fruit."—"I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest me out of the world—and they have kept Thy *word*—I pray for them—neither pray I for these alone; but for them also which shall believe on Me through their *word*." (John 17.) "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by *the word*.—We thank God without ceasing, because, when ye received the *word* of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth *the word* of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

All this, and all that relates either to the Divine or to human agency in the salvation of men, implies that the words of Scripture, which men are to believe in order to their being justified and sanctified, endure forever, and are infallible: insomuch that no other than the originals, and words which express the same thoughts into which the originals may be translated, will subserve the agency of the Spirit, or the exercise of faith. For such words only express the thoughts of the Revealer, concerning the things to which the agency of the Spirit relates, and those which men are to believe; and those things are forever the same, under all dispensations. Faith, justification, and sanctification are ever the same. Abraham believed God—the words of God—and was justified; he obeyed His words, and was sanctified; his faith is the pattern of that of believers in every age.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## WORDS NECESSARILY AND PERFECTLY REPRESENT AND EXPRESS THE THOUGHTS CONCEIVED IN THEM.

BECAUSE words are the constituted instrument and vehicle of thought, and we conceive thoughts in words, and not without or independently of them, they necessarily and perfectly express the thoughts conceived in them. As conceived, they represent to the intellect, as when written to the eye, and when spoken to the ear, all that we are conscious of in the act of thinking. Sensations, feelings, and emotions are subject to no fixed or uniform rules. But words are regulated and restricted in their office. As the vehicle and representative of thought, they are its perfect counterpart and correlate. As well might one pretend to see objects which do not exist, or are not visible, and which, therefore, he can not be conscious of seeing—or to hear sounds which he is not conscious of hearing—as to pretend that he has thoughts of which he is not conscious, or which differ in kind or degree from those of which their vehicle makes him conscious. Words exist solely to be the instrument and medium of thought, as the visibility of objects exists that they may be seen,

and the audibility of sounds that they may be heard. If successive acts of seeing the same identical objects so as perfectly to distinguish them, were not uniform and certain, the power of seeing, so far from fulfilling its purpose, would but mislead and confuse. If successive sounds were not so heard as uniformly and perfectly to distinguish one sound from another, the power of hearing, instead of guiding, would confound us. So as to the power of thinking. If the vehicle of thought were not necessarily, uniformly, and perfectly commensurate with the thoughts conceived, we could have no certainty as to what our thoughts were. Whether as to thoughts intellectually conceived in words, or thoughts vocally expressed to us by our fellow-men, it is plain that we can no further comprehend and be conscious of them, than the words employed perfectly represent and express them. All that we know, in either case, is the meaning of the words employed in each particular instance. Hence the necessity of learning the meaning of words in order to conceive in them the thoughts which they represent and are intended to express, and to understand by them the thoughts of others who speak or write them. No man receives the thoughts of another, if expressed in a tongue foreign to him; nor can he conceive thoughts which in his own or other tongues are represented only by words unknown to him.

Now inspiration, as its effects show, comprised a correct conception of the meaning, the form, and the sounds of the words in which the inspired thoughts were conveyed, so that the sacred writers were rendered conscious of the thoughts, and were qualified to con-

ceive them in the same words, and to express them intelligibly and perfectly by speaking and by writing. Their words, therefore, necessarily represented and expressed the thoughts of which they were made conscious by inspiration. And if they expressed the thoughts at all, they must have expressed them perfectly; for they were the vehicles and correlates of the thoughts, and all that they knew of the thoughts they were made conscious of by the words.

This will readily be granted with respect to the words which are recorded as having been spoken by the Most High, Creator, Lawgiver, Ruler, and Redeemer of men. For if those words do not perfectly express the thoughts which He intended to convey and to have us conceive in them, then we can not be certain that we know what His thoughts are upon any subject, and can not regard the Scriptures as His word. They are not a revelation unless they really convey His thoughts to us; and if they do not perfectly and infallibly convey them, we are, as truly as the heathen, in darkness concerning our relations to Him, what we are to believe, and what duties He requires of us. But if they do so express and convey His thoughts, then we must conclude that the words written in connection with them in the Scriptures, perfectly express the thoughts which they represent; for the two classes are intimately intermingled, equally significant and intelligible, equally necessary to the scope and meaning of sentences and paragraphs, and of necessity from their purport and relations, must have been alike inspired into the minds of the writers.

The words employed in the Scriptures, excepting

those which conveyed thoughts previously unknown to men, are such as were in common use at the time, and of which the meaning was perfectly understood ; which implies that as used in Scripture they perfectly express the thoughts which they there represent ; for they largely refer to the objects and affairs of common life, and to be intelligible, must have been used according to the common acceptance on which all faith and confidence among men depended. On the other hand, the words employed to convey thoughts previously unknown to the writers, both those which were entirely new, and those which were previously in familiar use, are employed in conformity with the same laws of language as the words which convey thoughts previously known. New and old words are intimately collocated and connected with each other in the composition. And the fact that such new words to express new thoughts, were, in the connections in which they are written, audibly spoken or expressly inspired by the Divine Revealer, is conclusive evidence that they perfectly expressed His thoughts.

By far the greater part, comprising several large classes of the words employed by the sacred penmen, indubitably and perfectly expressed the thoughts which they represented, for they related to things which have undergone no change, and which, accordingly, they still exactly represent. Such are the names and designations of the Divine Being ; the terms by which His attributes, acts, purposes, predictions, laws, and promises are expressed ; the proper names of men, of places, and of innumerable things animate and inanimate ; the relations, faculties, acts, and duties of men ;

numbers, proportions, relations, and qualities of things; sin, holiness, repentance, faith, and other moral qualities and distinctions; love, joy, sorrow, ease, pain, and other emotions and sensations. In short, all the words which relate to the creation, the nature, the acts, the moral condition, and the experience of man, and all that relate to the Divine Being and His acts; and all likewise that relate to the invisible world, to death, to the resurrection, to the judgment, to a future existence, to the holy and to fallen angels. If these words, which essentially constitute the Scriptures, did not, as inspired, perfectly express and convey to those who knew their meaning, the exact thoughts which they represented and were intended to convey; then we have no certainty that we know the truth in any particular concerning the Divine Being, or the subjects of either of the classes of words above referred to. For if the thoughts which these words represent are not precisely the thoughts of Him who inspired them, then they do not reveal His thoughts. If any one of the classes referred to, that which relates to the Divine Being, or that which relates to the invisible world, do not truly represent His thoughts, then we can have no evidence that any of the other classes truly represent His thoughts, and no part of the Scriptures can, with propriety, be called His word.

A revelation from God is a communication of His thoughts in such manner that they may be intelligently apprehended and understood by man. A revelation when audibly spoken, or when committed to writing, must be expressed in words, and in words which intelligibly and definitely express and convey the thoughts

which they are employed to represent and reveal. For otherwise they either would reveal nothing or no one could determine what they revealed. The language employed must, therefore, have preëxisted with a definite meaning corresponding to the thoughts to be expressed, and with such rules of usage and construction as to render it intelligible: or it must have been miraculously formed and appropriated to its office when first employed as a medium of instruction to man, and a knowledge of its meaning must at the same time have been imparted to him. The language first spoken to man, was spoken by his Creator, and, therefore, beyond a doubt, perfectly expressed His thoughts. It may have preëxisted. It may have been the language of His eternal counsels, as it was of His subsequent counsels and covenants. It may have been spoken to angels and by them, as it afterwards was. It may have been as perfect as an expression of the thoughts represented by it, and in all other respects, as the marks or figures of mathematical notation, are for the purpose for which they exist, or as the diatonic scale in music is for the expression of melodious sounds. The number of possible mathematical figures and arithmetical combinations is limited. The number of distinct musical notes and musical sounds is limited. The number of letters and of articulate alphabetic sounds is also limited. These, and their combinations in words, are as susceptible of having a fixed and definite signification, as they are of distinct articulate pronunciation, or as arithmetical figures are of denoting distinct and definite numbers, or as a gamut is of representing distinct musical sounds. And the rules according to which

syllables, words, and sentences are formed, so as to express grammatically and perfectly the thoughts which they represent, are inherently and necessarily as uniform and imperative as the rules by which figures are combined to express different numbers, quantities, or proportions, and as the rules by which musical notes and vocal sounds are combined to express different musical tones. Some thoughts can neither be conceived nor expressed directly and without circumlocution, in any other than a single word. Thus the word *ten* alone expresses the simple thought of that aggregate of units, as the word *one* does that of a single unit. So of a very large proportion of the objects of our senses, and of their qualities and relations. Such are the root words of every language. But derivations, expressions of complex or modified thoughts are often represented by one or more synonyms, or approximately synonymous words, of which some are more and some less comprehensive of the thought to be expressed in particular instances. The reason why particular words, and not others, are employed as numerals, is precisely the same as the reason why particular words and not others are employed to express other facts and truths of every description. It is *usage*, in every instance, that determines the appropriation and significance of particular words. By usage they are known and understood to express particular thoughts. Our thoughts of numbers—mathematical truths—may be more definite and invariable than our thoughts of moral truths; but it is in no degree owing to the words selected to express them, but wholly to the degree of our knowledge, the applicability and in-



fluence of our primary beliefs, and the greater or less clearness of our conceptions.

Mr. Locke, so far as he is consistent with himself in his speculations, treats of *ideas* as quite distinct and different from *thoughts*—an idea being, as defined by him, “Whatsoever is the *object* of the understanding, when a man thinks.” But when he comes to consider numbers, he is forced to perceive that we think of them, and can think of them, only in words, and that the intellectual power of numeration, in the case of each and every individual, is absolutely bounded by his knowledge of the words used to signify numbers. He cites, in illustration of this, the case of uncivilized men whom he had examined, who “could reckon very well to twenty, but could not by any means count to one thousand, because their *language* being scanty, and accommodated only to the few necessaries of a needy, simple life, unacquainted either with trade or mathematics, *had no words in it* to stand for a thousand, so that, when they were discoursed with of those greater numbers, they would show the hairs of their head to express a great multitude, which they could not number; which inability, I suppose, proceeded from their want of names. . . . And I doubt not but we ourselves might distinctly number *in words* a great deal further than we usually do, would we find out but some fit denominations to signify them by.” (Book 2, §§ 5, 6.) Had the author perceived the same thing and reasoned in the same way, concerning all the subjects of his inquiry, his Essay might have been free from its objectionable doctrines, and productive only of a wholesome influence. Neither the savage nor the civ-

ilized have any distinct thoughts either of numbers or of any thing else, any further than they have a knowledge of words in which to conceive and by which to express their thoughts.

The design and adaptation of the vocal organs to be exercised in speaking, of the auditory organs to be exercised in hearing, and of the visual in seeing, are founded in the physical and mental constitution of man. Those organs are alike perfect as instruments of receiving and imparting intelligence. The effects of their exercise are the results of their organization, and are uniform. Words spoken as certainly and necessarily convey the thoughts which they signify as the hearing of them proves the utterance of articulate sounds, or as the seeing of physical objects proves the reality of their visible presence. In a word, there can, in the nature of the case, be no less reason why language should correspond perfectly in significance to the thoughts represented by it, and why the intellectual conception and consciousness of thoughts by means of words unspoken and unwritten should be precisely the same as when occasioned by hearing the words vocally pronounced, or reading them in print; than why the same external objects as seen at different times, under the same conditions, should appear to be precisely the same. Uniformity of effect is as necessary and as important in the one case as in the other. Words, accordingly, are by the purpose and appointment of the Creator in the organization and constitution of man, the necessary medium, representative, and instrument of thought; and they perfectly fulfill their office.

Nevertheless there are not wanting those who ima-

gine that they have thoughts which they can not express in words, while others with equal reason, profess to see while their eyes are closed and bandaged, and to see things in the interior or on the opposite side of the globe, and to hear voices where there are no audible sounds. The writings of the first of these classes are designed to show that words are wholly incompetent to express some thoughts, and insufficient perfectly to express any. Yet they labor hard to convey their own thoughts to their fellow-mortals, by this inadequate and fallacious medium. And though they necessarily fail to furnish any evidence that they have any thoughts which they have not words to express, they exhibit a degree of skill in using words in such a way as to signify nothing, and thereby subject themselves to the obloquy of not being understood. Were their theory true, we must needs conclude that the whole race had from the beginning been insane in supposing that they had understood each other's thoughts by their words; while any attempt to instruct men orally or by books, must, of course, be fruitless, and an effort made under the sway of the hallucination, to show that the theory is true, must be set down as merely ridiculous.

It is obviously quite as necessary to man in respect to all his relations, interests, responsibilities, and duties, that his words, as intellectually conceived, and as spoken and written, should perfectly represent his thoughts and all of them, as that his sight should perfectly distinguish all the objects of vision, and his hearing all articulate sounds.

If it were not a provision of his constitution, a law of his physical and mental organization, that each par-

ticular sound, intonation, and musical note should be heard and uniformly distinguished from all other sounds ; and that each visible object should, under the same conditions, be seen and uniformly distinguished from all other visible objects, man could not exist. And if it were not an inherent law of his constitution, that his words should express his thoughts so as perfectly to represent them, he could not exist as a moral and social being. Nay, since he is conscious of thinking only in words, if his words were not the exact measure and real pattern and matrix of all his thoughts, his consciousness could afford no certainty as to what he was thinking of.

The absurdity of a contrary theory may be illustrated by supposing that the same external objects did not always appear to the eye to be the same ; that the human person, for example, as seen at successive intervals, appeared, now in its natural form, then in that of a quadruped, a reptile, or a vegetable ; or that the same sounds did not uniformly strike the ear so as to be distinguished as the same ; that musical chords had the effect of discords, vocal articulation, that of undistinguishable noises, without meaning, alternately with that of distinct and significant sounds. Such, accordingly, is the argument and illustration in the inspired words written by the Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. 14 : 1-33—the grounds of which are that God is not the author of confusion, and that, according to the nature and constitution of things as ordained by Him, words represent thoughts, and are to be spoken in such a language or so interpreted, as to convey the thoughts to those who hear. *“ Things without life giving sound, whether pipe*

*or harp, unless they give a difference to the notes, both in tone and in time, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? Such unmeaning sounds are a fit image of unintelligible language, both in their nature and in their effects. And therefore if the trumpet, instead of sounding those notes whose meaning is understood by the soldiers, shall give an unknown sound, who in that case will prepare himself for battle? So also ye, when ye speak by inspiration in your public assemblies, unless with the tongue ye utter intelligible speech, how shall it be known what is spoken? Therefore, however important the things ye speak may be, ye will be speaking into the air, like madmen. There are no doubt as many kinds of languages used in the world as ye speak, and none of them is without signification to those who are acquainted with them. Nevertheless, if I do not know the meaning of the language that is uttered, I shall be to the person who speaketh a foreigner," etc. (Macknight's paraphrase.)*

The intellectual as well as the physical capacities of man are limited; and the modes in which they are exercised and manifested are likewise limited. The modes in which he perceives external objects, the modes in which he manifests his thoughts, and the objects of perception and thought are limited. By means of five senses all his perceptions of external objects take place. By means of language, and signs, all the manifestations of his thoughts to others are effected. But there is order and congruity between his senses and their objects, and his thoughts and the means by which he expresses them. Those qualities of objects which are perceptible through the senses, correspond in species and in distinctness from each

other, to the senses appropriated to them; and for each distinct thought, there is a distinct word or sign, which is known to those who intelligibly express their thoughts.

The objects of perception and thought are limited, in number, variety, and all those characteristics which are perceptible to us, and of which we have words to express our thoughts. Of large classes of them, indeed, the limit, at least in respect to our capacity, is fixed in the constitution which the Creator originally established, and so fixed as to be conclusively ascertained by us. Thus we are so constituted as to be capable of uttering by the voice and distinguishing by the ear, only forty different articulate sounds; nor is it possible for us to conceive in thoughts, or describe in words any other simple or elementary sounds. So of the distinct colors which we perceive by the eye; and the elements into which all physical substances are resolvable by chemical analysis. Whether with a visual organ of greater capacity other distinct colors would be perceptible, or whether with greater powers of analysis the elements in which our chemistry terminates would be further resolvable, is more than we know.

The same may be observed of other departments of knowledge—as of that, for example, of the elements and axioms of arithmetical and mathematical knowledge, and that of geometrical figures. All these are as perfectly distinct from each other, as are the numbers one and two; they are the objects invariably of the same distinct thoughts; we have distinct words whereby to express them; we can think of them, not apart from, but only in connection with those words, as we hear them

pronounced, read them as figured or written, silently recall them to remembrance, or give them vocal utterance. And we can no more think of any of those elements or figures apart from the words by which we express them, than we can conceive in thought or express in words other and wholly different numbers, relations, axioms, and figures.

The question is not whether there are in the realms of nature, objects of sense, which our senses are neither designed nor competent to perceive?—nor whether the intellect of a created being is of a nature to be capable of thinking without any coincident use, instrumentality, or knowledge of words?—but, whether man, physically and mentally constituted and circumstanced as he is, ever actually has or can have, any distinct thoughts, any intellectual perceptions or cognitions, original or remembered, apart from words? If he has, and yet can not express them in words, then he can not be conscious of them himself, nor remember them, nor give any sort of evidence that he has them. For no one consciously thinks, compares or reasons in silence, otherwise than in words, as when he speaks or writes his thoughts; nor ever consciously remembers thoughts disconnected from words. If such thoughts are imagined to exist, then they must be fancied to have the same relative place, with those objects of sense, if there be such, which our senses can not discover.

To characterize such inexpressible thoughts as unspoken is to attempt to describe by words what, by the supposition, we have no words to represent; and is like attempting to describe sensations supposed to be produced by external objects which are beyond the reach

of our senses. The fallacy arises from the mistaken notion—to which reference is hereafter more particularly to be made—that *words* stand for *things*, instead of simply and exclusively representing *thoughts*. It is the sole office of words to be the medium of thoughts, intellectually, vocally, and in writing; and they fulfill that office perfectly in respect to all the thoughts of which we are conscious. If, like sensations, they signified only *things*, it might be necessary to imagine a vast store-house of thoughts which, owing to their incompetence and the unfitness of our vocabulary, could not be expressed. Whereas we have words for all our thoughts, which are as perfect as our thoughts are, and will convey our meaning to others who understand the words as precisely and fully as we comprehend it ourselves. He who has clear and precise thoughts, will as certainly have words whereby to convey them to others with clearness and precision, as he who has perfect organs of vision will be, perfectly to see and distinguish visible objects; or as he whose auditory organs are perfect, will be, perfectly to hear and distinguish audible sounds. And it would be every whit as rational to suppose that the objects which we see and the sounds which we hear were not what those organs were constituted and intended to perceive, as to suppose that our words, the vocal utterances of our thoughts, did not signify and express them. He who complains that he has not words to express his thoughts, does but confess that he lacks the thoughts themselves, or has them only in a confused, indeterminate, and unintelligible state.

It has been argued that a verbal expression of our



thoughts concerning colors, sounds, or other objects of sensational perception, to those who have never experienced the corresponding sensations, fails to convey to them ideas of colors, sounds, etc., and therefore that language is imperfect and inadequate. But it does not follow that because the vocal utterance of words does not fulfill the peculiar office of seeing and hearing, and other senses, therefore it does not perfectly fulfill its own peculiar office. It is not pretended that words represent colors, or sounds, or sensations. It is their office to represent and express thoughts, and that they perfectly accomplish. For example: the word *blue* is the name of a color of which we attain a knowledge only by sight. The word *thunder* is the name of a sound which we know by hearing. The word *pain* is the name of a sensation which we know by suffering it. When we have experienced what these names denote, and learned what they are employed to signify, we think of the several sensations in the words appropriated to them respectively. When we utter those words in the hearing of those who from their own experience understand them, they perfectly convey our thoughts. To utter them to those who have had no such experience is but the same as to utter them to persons who are deaf, dumb, and paralytic; and is to no more purpose as an argument in opposition to the perfect sufficiency of words to express our thoughts, than it would be to say that because the blind and deaf can not see and hear, therefore the organs of sight and hearing are not perfect and adequate to their object. It is those only who take words to be the signs of *things*, who imagine them to be inadequate to their office, because they do not

convey the sensations of sounds and colors, as well as the thoughts which the names of those sensations represent. Words, as truly as our senses, are instruments or channels of information, the one concerning our thoughts, the other concerning external objects. It is not the part of either of them to supersede or to perform the office of the other.

The soul acts and is acted on through the organs of the body. The senses are its instruments, in relation to the external world. The visual and auditory organs are among its instruments of perception, and sensation, which precede our thoughts concerning those phenomena. The vocal organs are the instruments of expressing thoughts in words. Words are the instruments by which the soul thinks and is conscious of its thoughts. The difference between these instrumentalities lies in this, that those which are merely physical organizations, as the eye and ear, produce their effects mechanically and without an intervention of the will. The open eye in the presence of visible objects, sees, whether the will consents or not. Whereas the act of thinking proceeds directly from the will, and involves responsibility which attaches to the words employed to signify and express the thoughts, and by using which the act of the soul in thinking is exerted. Hence the certainty that words are the instruments, the constituted and necessary vehicle of *all* our thoughts. Our responsibility begins with the act of the will, which is realized to the soul in a consciousness of what, when expressed by the vocal organs, we call words. The act of the will, the thought, and the consciousness of it in a form equivalent to the mind to a verbal expression of it to

the ear, are coincident. Hence successive thoughts are the result of successive acts of the will ; and we are conscious of them in the order of that succession, as when we give them vocal utterance. We can no more think of two distinct objects or the names of them at the same time, than we can pronounce those names simultaneously. The exercise of the will is, therefore, as necessary to the production of any one thought as to that of any other, and as necessary to the production of each successive thought as the exercise of the vocal organs is to each successive vocal expression. We not only remember thoughts in the words by which they were expressed, but we remember them in the syllabic succession of vocal utterance.

Because words which we employ as names of sensible objects do not express all the particular thoughts we have concerning the natures, qualities, relations, and uses of those objects, those words are alleged by some to be imperfect and inadequate ; as though they would, if perfect, express, respectively, not one, only, but scores of distinct thoughts. But it might, on the same ground, and with equal reason, be alleged that the visual organ is imperfect, since to see an object is to see only its outline or surface, not its internal structure and qualities. It is on the contrary a perfection of language corresponding to perfection in the exercise of the intellect according to its constitution, and perfection in the vocal organs and their exercise, that words represent only the distinct thoughts which they are expressly employed to signify ; some to represent the thoughts which are signified by the names of objects ; others, those which relate to the natures, qualities, and

other particulars of those objects. For thus it is that words are made to represent distinctly all the thoughts we have. Our intellectual constitution is such that, on the one hand, all those objects of any particular class, which are generally alike, or in one or more respects identical, however numerous and diverse the details, are comprehensible under one name—that is, one *word*, while the diversities and details are distinguishable by other words; and on the other hand, all our intellectual notions, to whatever they relate, are conceived by us in words which are already known to us in some physical or mental relation, and which we appropriate to new conceptions; or are conveyed to us by words spoken or written, which we hear or read.

Thus is our knowledge regulated in its acquisition, and limited in extent. Words result from our mental and physical constitution as thinking and speaking, seeing and hearing do. To imagine that we know any thing which we have not words to express, is equivalent to imagining that we hear sounds which are not audible, and perceive in matter what is beyond the reach of our senses. We can no more conceive intellectually of any thing without words, than we can see without visual or hear without auditory organs. It may pertain to our constitution that the thoughts which result from our involuntary sensations, should excite the intellect and the will to conceive thoughts other than those which it is the province of sensation to originate. The power to think and to conceive new thoughts, may thus be put in operation by the enginery and prior action of the senses; and the thoughts so conceived may comprise what some denominate intuitions;

but however that may be, and from whatever influence they may result, they are spontaneously and invariably conceived in words, and words whose signification is of course identical with the thoughts of which they are thus the matrix, and which they perfectly represent and express when spoken and written.

Intellect is a part of our nature, and as a created organism is as perfect as any of the adjunct organs of sense. It operates organically according to its nature, as the organs of sense do according to theirs. That intellectually to conceive thoughts in words therefore, and not otherwise, should be a result of organization—a law of intellectual action, is no more remarkable, than that distinct and diverse sensations of sight should be a result of the organic structure and operation of the eye. The connection of the will with thoughts and words intellectually conceived, and with the feelings which they excite gives them their moral character and significance. The difference between the orthography and the vocal sounds of the words in different languages which represent and express the same thoughts, originates, not in the intellectual organism in conceiving thoughts in words, but in the antecedent and accustomed articulations of the words of the respective languages. Hence words inspired into the mind of a Greek, conveying thoughts to be understood and to be spoken and written by him, will be in sound, articulation, and orthography, Greek words. If he be individually familiar with but few and simple words, the inspired words will be the same, or correspond in simplicity with those previously known to him. And here lies the ground of confidence in translations. As

the words originally inspired perfectly conveyed the thoughts which they were intended to express, so the words of equivalent signification, in the same connections in other languages, when substituted for the originals, will perfectly convey the same thoughts: according to the example, 1 Cor. 14, where the words of those who spoke in tongues unknown to the audience, were to be translated by others by the articulation of equivalent words which the hearers understood. In like manner with respect to uninspired words: men of different nations conceive the same precise thoughts in the peculiar words of their respective tongues; and possess themselves of each other's thoughts by each substituting his own for the foreign words of the other.

It is undoubtedly true that the words which we employ in our intellectual conceptions are, for the most part, the same, or derivatives from the same, which were previously in use in relation to sensational perceptions and objects of sense; and hence the secondary significations, which are founded in real or conceived analogies, and the figurative and poetical use of words, and those intellectual visions of agents, objects, acts, and effects, in which analogous things are symbolically represented.

The most respectable attempt which we have met with to prove the imperfection of language, by argument and induction, is exhibited by Mr. Dugald Stewart in that part of his Philosophical Essays, in which he refutes the peculiar notions of Mr. Horne Tooke: where he endeavors to show that words spoken or written, instead of being the vehicle by which the thoughts of the

speaker or writer are conveyed to the hearer, do but serve the insignificant purpose of stimulating his mind to think. Presuming that this acute and practised writer has done the best that could be done, to establish, or, at least, to impart a degree of plausibility to the view which he adopts, and that he has, however, succeeded, notwithstanding the imperfection which he ascribes to language, in conveying his own thoughts to his readers by means of the words which he employs; we deem it worth the while to examine what he says. We can not help surmising, however, at the outset, that he had not, in this instance, a perfectly clear conception of the import and relations of what he said; and that the special view which he took of the office and effect of words, was induced by his zeal to subvert the erroneous theories of the writers whom he opposed. The leading proposition in the first series of his Essays, is, that we have many primary beliefs, notions, or ideas, the suggestion of which to the mind, is occasioned, not by sensation or consciousness, or by any external influence, but by the exercise of certain of our mental faculties. These ideas he seems to have conceived of as existing independently of words; a delusive and futile abstraction, precisely on a level with that of conceiving of geometrical problems independently of lines, curves, and angles. To treat of those ideas as things having a potential existence before we are conscious of them, is to transcend the bounds of consciousness, and utter words without significance. No sooner do they exist as thoughts than we are conscious of them; but we are conscious of them only in and by means of the words which express and represent them. That there

is in the constitution of the mind a foundation, capacity, susceptibility, of experiencing those normal beliefs, convictions, intuitions, of being excited to think those thoughts and of actually thinking them, is as plain as that there is a foundation for feeling sensations, hearing audible sounds, and seeing visible objects. But when we think either of sensations or intuitions, words are the matrix and vehicle of our thoughts.

The fallacy pertaining to this disquisition, which arises from his partial view of what we are actually conscious of, clings to his refutation of the philological speculations of Mr. Tooke; and if it did not occasion, it forms a principal element of all his observations concerning the imperfection of language.

"We speak," he says, "of *communicating*, by means of words, our ideas and our feelings to others; and we seldom reflect sufficiently on the latitude with which this metaphorical (?) phrase ought to be understood. The truth is, that, even in conversing on the plainest and most familiar subjects, however full and circumstantial our statements may be, the words which we employ, if examined with accuracy, will be found to do nothing more than to suggest *hints* to our hearers, leaving by far the principal part of the process of interpretation to be performed by the mind itself. In this respect, the effect of *words* bears some resemblance to the *stimulus* given to the memory and imagination, by an outline or a shadow, exhibiting the profile of a countenance familiar to the senses. . . . In reading, for example, the enunciation of a proposition, we are apt to fancy, that for every word contained in it, there is an *idea* presented to the understanding; from the combination and comparison of which *ideas*, results the act of the mind called *judgment*. So different is all this from the fact, that our words, when examined separately, are often as completely insignificant as the letters of which they are composed; deriving their meaning solely from the connection, or relation, in which they stand to others. Of this a very obvious example occurs, in the case of terms which have a *variety* of acceptations, and of which the import, in every particular application, must be collected from the whole sentence of which they form a part."



Having alleged this necessity of comprehending the words of a sentence according to their import in the connection and relation to each other in which they are arranged, in order to express the thought which they are intended to convey, as an inherent imperfection of language, he goes on to say that the imperfection is great and palpable in proportion as the words of a sentence are, in their arrangement, more or less capable of being transposed; and greatest of all when complex or abstract notions are to be spoken of. Thus:

"In reading, accordingly, the most perspicuous discussions, in which such notions form the subject of the argument, little instruction is received, till we have made the reasonings *our own*, by revolving the steps again and again in our thoughts. The fact is, that, in cases of this sort, the function of language is not so much to convey knowledge (according to the common phrase) from one mind to another; as to bring two minds into the *same train of thinking*; and to confine them as nearly as possible to the same track. Many authors have spoken of the wonderful *mechanism of speech*; but none has hitherto attended to the far more wonderful *mechanism* which it puts into action behind the scene."

We humbly conceive that the difficulty which Mr. Stewart regarded as an imperfection in language, is in fact in no degree of that nature, but arises wholly from ignorance, negligence, or other defects in speakers and writers and in hearers and readers. He who conceives thoughts clearly, and utters them distinctly in the words in which he conceives them, does all that is needful on his part to convey them to other minds. He expresses his own thoughts as he conceives them, in the words which signify them to his own consciousness, and which, understood as he understands them,

are their exact echo and representative to others. The difficulty, or ground of alleged imperfection, lies, not in any inherent or real imperfection in language as the vehicle of thought; but wholly in the fact, that from education and habit, from different degrees of knowledge as to the usage and the proper and received signification of words, or from prejudice, partisanship, or other causes which influence their understandings and their wills, speakers and hearers, readers and writers, do not uniformly and upon all subjects, understand the same words, however arranged and related, as signifying the same thoughts. A writer who, upon a subject which is equally well understood by all his readers, and equally familiar to them as a subject of daily conversation, employs only such words as are in familiar and constant use respecting it, will, in those words, perfectly convey his thoughts to his readers. He will convey them in the words in which he conceives them, and for the reason that they are perfectly signified by those words as he understands them; and for the same reason they will receive them in those words.

Accordingly upon all the subjects and in all the instances, in which it is impossible for the reader to differ from the writer as to the signification of the words which he employs to express his thoughts—as proper names; local, topical, geographical, national, and other designations; legal, theological, political, scientific, philosophical, technical, and professional terms; numbers, proportions, qualities, weights, measures, etc., etc.; they understand his words, in the connections and relations in which he employs them, in the same sense with him, and he perfectly conveys his thoughts to

them in the words in which both he and they alike conceive them.

But upon other subjects, in other instances, and in every case, just in proportion as the reader is deficient of knowledge of the appropriation, usage, and meaning of the words employed by a writer, the writer by the use of those words will fail to convey his thoughts to such reader; and this we apprehend is what Mr. Stewart erroneously treats as an imperfection of language. The argument of this generally lucid and elegant writer, proceeds upon the assumption, that if language were not inherently and necessarily imperfect, it would convey the thoughts of a writer as perfectly to a reader who did not understand and comprehend the signification, arrangement, and relations of the words employed by him, as to one who did, or to one who by patiently revolving and studying the words of a sentence, upon a complex, abstract, or otherwise obscure and difficult subject, should at length fully attain the thoughts of the writer. As well might he argue, that if man's eyes, the instruments of his visual perceptions, were not imperfect, he would discern objects that were shrouded in darkness, as clearly as he could discern the same or other objects in broad daylight; and that the function of the eye was not so much to convey knowledge of the object seen, as to excite and stimulate the visual faculty. Language, correctly understood and used, is, as the medium of thought, as perfect, as is the eye as the medium of vision; and were men's knowledge and use of it as perfect as the organic action of the eye, they would universally think alike, and upon abstruse as well as upon plain and

familiar subjects, would perfectly convey their thoughts to each other by their words; and, notwithstanding the extreme diversity in the degrees of their knowledge of words, it is certain that, generally, and in respect to all matters of familiar thought and experience, they do actually think alike, and, by their words, do perfectly express and convey their thoughts to each other. To assert the contrary is to contradict the experience and consciousness of all classes of men. Were the contrary true, the affairs of domestic, social, and political life could not go on: the enactment and publication of laws, the terms of contracts, the execution of deeds and wills, the testimony of witnesses, the verdicts of juries, the decisions of courts, would determine nothing. Speaking and writing would, as really in one case as in another, be the greatest of all absurdities. It could not with certainty be known by the words of a sentence whether it expressed an affirmative or a negative, a premise or an induction, a question or an answer.

Mr. Locke admits that, to understand each other, men must understand and use words alike. But instead of holding that ideas or thoughts are conveyed from one mind to another by words, he contends that it is the design and end of speech to excite thought in other minds; and assumes that if the hearer understands the words of the speaker just as he does, they will excite him to cogitate the same thoughts. This, however, amounts to much more than merely exciting the hearer's mind to think. It amounts to no less than saying, that if men understand each other's words alike, each will perfectly convey his thoughts to the other by

his words, and not merely excite the other's mind to think, and so bring two minds, as Mr. Stewart has it, into the same train of thinking. On their theory, it would be impossible to give a reason why it is necessary for speaker and hearer to understand words alike. If the end or effect of speaking is, not to convey ideas, but only to excite the hearer to think, why should particular words which they understand alike be necessary? According to the theory those words would not convey any thoughts whatever, and could, therefore, furnish no clue by which to determine, or even to guess, what the ideas of the speaker were. How, then, could they 'bring two minds into the same train of thinking, and put them upon the same track'? It is plainly impossible that they should have any such effect, unless they embodied the same definite conceptions in the minds of those who understood them alike, and actually conveyed the thoughts of one mind to another. Accordingly, the cases to which Mr. Locke, Mr. Stewart, and others, apply this theory, by way of illustrating and upholding their notions of the imperfection of language, are exclusively cases in which, from ignorance or prejudice, men, whether upon simple or upon complex and abstract subjects, do not understand the same things by the same words. Were they equally instructed and equally candid, the alleged imperfection of language would disappear. The fault would be perceived to be not an imperfection of language, but a defect of education and use. No one, it is presumed, will deny that each man perfectly understands his own thoughts by his words. His words, therefore, as he understands them, perfectly signify his

thoughts to his own consciousness. The same words, understood as he understands them, will as perfectly signify the same thoughts to the intelligent consciousness of another man. And, therefore, if they converse together, each using words as they both understand them, will by his words perfectly convey his thoughts to the other. If this were not absolutely true in fact and in universal experience, instruction, education, science, philosophy, theology would be unmeaning terms; speaking, writing, reading, would be futile and absurd.

Mr. Locke's *Essay*, Book 3d, "Of Words or Language," proceeds upon the assumption that words stand for things or for ideas, as defined by him to be the objects of the understanding when a man thinks; and that language is imperfect in the same degree that words fail to signify the nature or essence, and the modes, qualities, and characteristics of the things to which they relate. It would be tedious, and perhaps useless, to add any thing to what has already been said in opposition to these notions. Undoubtedly they lie at the foundation of all the past and present theories of the inherent and necessary imperfection of language; and they are so deeply rooted in the systems of metaphysics, and have so long held an undisputed sway in the schools of literature and philosophy, that if a bare statement of their erroneousness, and of the impossibilities and absurdities which they involve, does not suffice to confute them, a more formal and extended confutation is required than the limits of the present volume will permit.

It is not more certain that man exists, than that he

thinks, and is conscious of and expresses his thoughts in words. As he exists, he is a compound creature, comprising soul and body. As such a creature, he thinks and acts organically. He thinks organically in that orderly grammatical succession which is exhibited in spoken and written sentences. He thinks organically in the words which constitute such sentences. He is conscious of his thoughts in those words, and not otherwise. His knowledge of the meaning of the words is prerequisite to his thinking. He is, therefore, taught the meaning of the words which are necessary in his infancy, and afterwards such as are necessary to his wants, his occupations, his duties, station, profession, or inclination. He thinks by a law of his nature which governs alike the succession of his thoughts and the succession of the words in which he thinks. To his consciousness his words, as intellectually conceived, are his thoughts. As spoken, his words are his thoughts audibly uttered. As written, his words are his thoughts visibly expressed. By the words which he speaks and writes he is known to others, precisely as he knows himself by the words which he consciously thinks. Language is just as necessary a condition of his thinking as light is of his seeing, and sound of his hearing. He was constituted to think in words, and only by means of words as truly and exclusively as he was constituted to see only by means of light and to hear only by means of sound. His capacity of thinking is dormant without words, or equivalent signs, and is bounded by his knowledge of words; as his capacity of seeing is dormant without light, and of hearing without sound. His capacity of thinking is enlarged by additions to his

knowledge of words, as his capacities of seeing and hearing are enlarged by artificial aids and facilities.

These observations might easily be confirmed and illustrated to any extent, by particular reference to the experience of individuals and communities, and to the effects of classical, scientific, and professional studies, as well as the effects of instruction in the nursery and in the common schools and seminaries. In every department and condition of life, those have the greatest power of thinking on given subjects, who have attained the most extensive and most accurate knowledge of words relating to them; because, as they acquire a knowledge of the words pertaining to any subject, they acquire the thoughts which those words convey, and are enabled to think the same thoughts in the same words. It is unphilosophical and absurd to speak of what they learn as a knowledge of things, separate and distinct from their knowledge of words. Beyond the narrow range of their senses, they know nothing of things any further than they know the meaning of the words which define and describe them. They think what they have been taught and in the words in which they were taught. Men of the same class, condition, habits, employments, and religion, have for the most part only the same thoughts, and employ only the same words. New thoughts are propagated among them only as new words are devised by them or introduced from without.

These remarks may suffice as an answer to the theories which for many years have been propagated by the leading German authors concerning the origin, office, and relations of language; among which that



of W. von Humboldt contains, perhaps, more glimpses of truth and of common-sense, than any of the rest. Their extreme proclivity to treat every question scientifically, leads them into vague, artificial, and bewildering generalizations, in which they lose themselves, and vainly waste their energies and their time in essays to explain what is inexplicable and make known what is unknowable, while they forget or neglect what is clearly within the sphere of our consciousness, observation, and experience. They discuss not the facts of individual experience, but the inscrutable causes of all the phenomena of language, upon theories assumed to be of universal application, while their rationalistic and Pantheistic notions of revelation, inspiration, and religion, exclude from them the lights, restraints, and aids of the infallible word of God.

Those metaphysical writers who endeavor to maintain the uncertainty of language, as though there was in the nature of the case no ground of certainty that the same words when used by different individuals concerning the same subjects and under the same circumstances, expressed the same thoughts and conveyed the same meaning, not only stultify themselves by using words to convey their own thoughts to others, but contradict experience. Men do, in fact, convey their thoughts, truly and perfectly, to each other by their words. When they employ words dishonestly, the words nevertheless import the same to the hearer or reader as if they were honestly used. The dishonesty does not affect the proper meaning of the words. It lies further back in the intention of the speaker. It is easy to assert, as such writers do, that no two indi-

viduals attach precisely the same meaning to the same words; but the assertion is a baseless assumption if made with any reference to individuals who have equally accurate knowledge of the meaning of words, and are at the same time equally honest. If they think the same thoughts, it is impossible that they should think them otherwise than in words understood according to their knowledge of their meaning. With respect to various classes of words—as proper names, numbers, proportions, qualities—they necessarily represent the same thoughts invariably to different individuals; but as representatives of thought those classes of words owe their established and uniform significance to the same reason as all other words; the reason, namely, that they are employed, taught, spoken, and written, as the representatives of particular thoughts.

All thoughts of which we have any consciousness or any knowledge whatever, are signified, expressed, represented, by words. Thinking, reasoning, reflecting, inventing, associating, remembering, every exercise of the intellect, presupposes language. An exercise of the intellect apart from language, can no more be conceived of, than arithmetic can be conceived of without numbers, or a substance without qualities, joy without emotion, colors without sight, hearing without sound.

It is evil *communications* that corrupt good manners. It is because they *convey* false, corrupt, debasing, demoralizing, impious, blasphemous thoughts, that corrupt, seductive, immoral, impious books, are injurious and destructive. If they did not actually *convey* the thoughts, in the words which constitute them, the

words would signify nothing. If the words as read and heard did not express the thoughts to the reader and hearer, they would express no meaning and could exert no influence. They would have no tendency or adaptation to excite or give rise to particular evil thoughts, or to any thoughts, good or bad, and would be used without purpose or effect. Were they not as truly the medium and vehicle by which the thoughts of one mind are transferred to another, as air is the medium and vehicle of sound, it would be as futile to employ them, as to attempt to produce sounds in a vacuum. The arrangement and combination of letters which constitute written words, constitute what is designated by that term, simply because that arrangement and combination signifies and expresses particular thoughts. What we call words, are such in no other sense, and to no other effect, than as they are used, articulated and written to signify, express, and convey particular thoughts.

It is wholly owing to false theories of the origin, nature, and use of language, that speculative men, philologists, and philosophers, treat of it as inherently and necessarily imperfect, ambiguous, and deceptive. As the vehicle of thought, words are in fact and necessarily as perfect as the conceptions of thought are, or as the thoughts conceived are. For all that is conceived as thought, is conceived in words as its embodiment and vehicle. All that we are conscious of as thought, we are conscious of in the words in which it is conceived. Thoughts and words are correlates. Words are the moulds of thoughts. All that is remembered of thoughts is remembered in words. All that is or can

be expressed of thoughts is expressed in articulate words or equivalent signs.

As the instrument of thinking and of expressing thoughts to others, words are as perfectly adapted, as adequate, and as reliable, as the faculty of thinking is. We neither know nor are conscious of any thing, that we have not words to express as clearly and definitely as we know or are conscious of it. It is not the fault of language that men are ignorant of it, or that they corrupt, pervert, or abuse it. It is not any inherent or necessary imperfection of words that deceives men, leads them to adopt false principles, or excites their prejudice or their passions.

Language is what the Creator of men has provided for them as the medium and instrument of thought—the medium through which He communicates His thoughts to them, and they their thoughts to Him and to one another. As intellectual, moral, and social beings, it is as necessary, as adequate, and as reliable as any of their natural faculties, sensational or rational, physical or mental. To suppose the contrary, considering the peculiar functions and purposes of this instrument, would be to impeach the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, and to assume that man neither has, nor can have, any infallible rule of faith and life, or any indubitable certainty either as to his own thoughts, or as to the thoughts of his fellow-creatures.

## CHAPTER IX.

## NATURE AND OFFICE OF TYPES.

It is because the words of Scripture have not been taken to signify simply and exactly the thoughts which they express in the connections in which they are employed, that fanciful and preposterous theories and systems of figurative, typical, and symbolic construction, have been predicated on them. Thus, whatever in the historical or prophetic records of the Old Testament presents any points of real or seeming analogy with any thing under the Christian dispensation, is assumed by many to be *typical* of such analogous things. And to meet the very formidable absurdity of supposing that the words of the original record conveyed no intelligible meaning, till the appearance, ages after, of the things typified, this class of interpreters ascribe to the words a double sense; one, that of the same words in their ordinary acceptation, the other a tropical or spiritual sense, according to which they may signify any thing that can be imagined.

Thus, on the ground that some of the official persons, and their acts, and the objects and effects of them, as described in the Old Testament, were typical of resembling persons, acts, and effects in the New, it is

gratuitously assumed that every thing set forth in the one, whether ritual, ceremonial, historical, or predictive, typified something analogous in the other. This may be one degree short of the system which regards all the phenomena of the earth and its inhabitants, as exact copies of corresponding things in the heavens; but it involves the supposition that the words of Scripture have one superficial, earth-born, vulgar meaning according to the letter, and beneath that, a deep, occult, spiritual meaning.

Now it is the nature and office of a type, visibly to foreshadow something resembling itself in nature and sphere, and either as a whole, or in some particular and important respect. The types of the Old Testament briefly expressed in a visible and impressive manner, what it would have required many words to express with equal effect. Like symbols, they were employed on the principles of analogy, and as substitutes for words; but they were not prophetic like symbols. Being illustrative personations, acts, and rites substituted for words, it was essential to their use as types, that the things signified should be known and understood beforehand. Otherwise they would be the medium or representative of no intelligence, and could not serve as substitutes for words, any more than a picture could represent as real an object which did not exist. They were accordingly used as types, not on account of any thing inherent in them, but solely by the Divine appointment; and were connected with the tabernacle and its ritual and services, which were in all respects of special Divine institution. It was their object by visible exhibition and action, to impress upon

the worshippers the most important truths of their religion, and to excite the exercise of their faith in them; truths which had been revealed, and were understood by the people. Thus, that Christ would appear in human nature, execute the office of a Priest, offer Himself a sacrifice for sin by the shedding of His own blood, and fulfill all that belonged to His office, had been revealed, and was understood; and obviously, it was just as necessary that those truths should be correctly understood beforehand, in order to their being represented by types in a manner intelligible to the worshippers, as in order to their being intelligibly and correctly expressed in words, and just as necessary that the official agency of the Jewish high priest, and every thing that had a typical reference, should be constituted a type by Divine appointment, in order to their correctly representing those truths, as that the truths themselves should be originally inspired. The appointment of certain persons, acts, and things, to typify certain specific acts and things which had been revealed, and on which the faith of the worshippers rested, was a mode of expressing revealed truths equivalent to an expression of them in words. For men, therefore, to treat as typical, any thing which had not that office by Divine appointment, would be an error like that of substituting words of their own choosing, in place of the original words of inspiration.

## CHAPTER X.

## THOUGHTS REMEMBERED ONLY IN WORDS.

It is the office of memory, to renew our former thoughts, by recalling the words in which we conceived and expressed them. We remember them only as we remember the words. We can no more remember than we can originally be conscious of them, apart from the words. Such is our experience, not only when in health, but when affected by diseases which intensify the power of recollection, or by which it is wholly or partially suspended. A case is known, for example, of a literary man, who, by the effect of disease, lost all recollection of what he had learned. By degrees he regained the names of the familiar objects of sense, as they are learned by a child. As he recovered his health, he learned the alphabet anew, and applied himself to the study of syllables and words, when suddenly all that he had formerly learnt in several languages, was instantly restored to him, so that he could speak, read, and write all the words previously within his knowledge. In another instance, the power of recollection was so enlarged that the thoughts and words relating to the experience of a life of many years, were rendered consciously present in a moment of time.



Every one knows that, when relating a story, repeating what he has heard or read, or stating a proposition, if he has forgotten some words—names of persons, or places, numbers, technical or qualifying terms—he is at a stand; he can not recall the thoughts without the lost words, and wanting them, his whole narrative, recital, or statement, may be rendered senseless, or false. He can not substitute another name for that of the hero or agent to whom his narrative relates. Another name would not express the thoughts of the forgotten original, and would not identify the person. On the contrary, it would be a fiction, a deception, or a falsehood. Even if he remembered some of the attributes of the man in question, they would not identify him. They would be such as belong to other men; whereas the name distinguishes him as an individual.

The necessary conditions of thinking are, understanding, will, language, and consciousness. Its auxiliaries are, external objects, organs of perception, vocal sounds, written words, and internal sensations; emotions, feelings, memory. Thinking itself, is the exercise of the understanding under the influence of the will, through the instrumentality of words, and with the cognizance of consciousness. Just in proportion, therefore, as any man is endowed with those conditions, and supplied with those auxiliaries, he is capacitated to think, and to express his thoughts intelligibly and perfectly to others. But the cogitative exercise of the understanding takes place only in accordance with our intellectual constitution and physical organization, and with the laws of the understanding and of language. That exercise, at first, and at every stage of

progress, is subject to those laws. In children, the conditions are but incipient. By experience of the external and internal auxiliaries, and by acquiring a knowledge of words, the understanding and the power of thinking are gradually, and may be indefinitely enlarged. Without acquiring a knowledge of words as instruments of thought and speech, the man would not emerge from the state of infancy. His constitution and organization as a cogitative being, would be as truly in vain, if he lacked a knowledge of words, as if he lacked understanding. Doubtless Adam could not have acquired a knowledge of words in the same way that his descendants do. But his existence did not, like theirs, commence with infancy, and being in all other respects a mature man, and needing immediately the language of that state, it is safe to conclude that He "who made man's mouth"—speech, organ of speech—imparted to him at once the requisite knowledge of words, as to those at a later period who had the gift of tongues and of the interpretation of them; and was "with his mouth, and taught him what to say," as He did to Moses.

It is owing to the organic structure of language, the vocal sounds, the syllables, the words, their distinctions and relations in the parts of speech, and to the relation of thoughts to words as their instruments, that our thoughts are conceived, remembered, and expressed, in an orderly and intelligible succession. The intellect and the instrument, the mental power and the machinery, are adapted to each other, and made to work together. But the machinery can work only according to its organization, and to that, therefore, the cogitative action

of the intellect is conformed. We not only think in words, but we think successively, according to the organic demands of oral and written language, which are fixed and uniform : and but for this organic instrumentality, for aught that is or can be known to us, our thoughts, instead of an orderly and intelligible succession, would, though conceived in words, be a mere chaos of successive sounds.

To this organic instrumentality, in its relation to memory, is to be referred the exercise of the intellectual power of associating thoughts which in some respect resemble or are analogous to each other. The consciousness of our present thoughts in the words by which we are rendered conscious of them prompts the recollection of resembling and analogous thoughts and words. The thoughts so recalled and associated, and which are commonly regarded as the product of a distinct *suggestive* faculty, are those of similitude, contrast, or correlation, and contiguity with respect to time and place. On the view above given of the office of words and of the memory of thoughts in words, they require, when they involve similitudes, no distinct faculty, any more than the present consciousness and recollection of any thoughts in the orderly succession of the words which represent them.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE FIGURATIVE USE OF WORDS.

THE figurative use of words, is the result of our organic mode of conceiving thoughts in words. Our words, for the most part, are primarily those which were earliest required and employed to signify our thoughts of things within the observation of our senses. But we naturally and easily appropriate them to express whatever thoughts we intellectually conceive of things of other kinds which have in some respect a real or an apparent resemblance. Such secondary analogical appropriations, are termed *figurative*, and are rendered obvious by the connections in which they occur. Thus we say of a bird on the wing, that *it flies*. Its progress, and the operation of its wings, we perceive by our sense of sight. Our thought of its movement, we express by the word *flies*. The resemblance between that movement, and that of a ship under sail, and that of a cloud impelled by the wind, is such, that we intelligibly and forcibly express our thought of the movements of the ship and the cloud, by saying, *the ship flies*, and *the cloud flies*. Such secondary and figurative use of words is as much a result of our intellectual and physical constitution, or to speak

more after the fashion of the day, as much the result of a law, as is our discernment of resemblances in certain particulars, between things which in other respects are wholly dissimilar ; or as that our modes of sensational perception, are different from our modes of intellectually conceiving things which are not objects of sensation. Analogies and resemblances are as safe and as competent grounds for the secondary and figurative use of words, as the information of the senses is for the primary and literal signification and use of the same words. The figurative use of words, therefore, is no more the offspring of conventional agreement, or human fancy or contrivance, than is their primary and literal use. Nor is the use and meaning in the one case any less intelligible than in the other. Accordingly the languages of different nations in proportion to their verbal affluence, are as much alike in respect to the figurative use of words, as the different peoples are in respect to their thoughts of the objects of sense, and the resemblances and differences of things.

Words being the intellectual medium, and, when articulated, the vocal expression of thought, are used according to their organic succession as instruments, and according to the references of the thoughts which they signify to the natures, qualities, and conditions of the things to which they relate. Their organic succession is realized in the orderly collocation of the syllables and words of sentences, as their references are discriminated by the parts of speech. Accordingly all languages have not only the same parts of speech, but essentially the same grammatical declensions, modes, and tenses, so that all the modifications of thought, cor-

responding to the diverse natures, qualities, and conditions of the things we perceive by our senses, and those which we intellectually conceive, are expressed by deflections from the primary signification and reference of our words, and by moods, tenses, etc., to a secondary and figurative signification. This orderly process is uniform and universal, in all languages, whether vocal only, or both vocal and written; and for the reason, that by the constitution of man, he thinks in words, and words which express his thoughts as perfectly as he conceives them; and, therefore, whatever may be his native tongue, his words correspond to his deflected and modified thoughts.

Such being the law of the intellect in thinking, of our vocal organs in articulating, and of the auditory organs in hearing, according to which we think in words which are perfect moulds and expressions of our thoughts, we of course think in words corresponding as perfectly to any one class of our thoughts as to any other; to our thoughts of simple entities, properties, qualities, affirmations, negations, acts, conditions, and to their comparative resemblances and shades of difference. Hence the *figurative* appropriation and use of words *to represent by resemblance* something else than that which they primarily and literally signify. This use of words is as easily learnt by children as the primary or literal meaning is, and is as necessarily a part of the first lessons taught them in speaking and reading. It is a perfection of language, resulting from the action of the intellect, and the vocal organs, under the control of the will, and from the mechanical perceptions and discriminations of the organs of sense. . It is a perfec-

tion by which the same words, the same articulate sounds, are made to express the different shades of thought in differing relations; and thereby supersedes the necessity of innumerable other words and circumlocutions which would otherwise be indispensable. The figurative use of words is not only common to all languages, but it largely pervades and characterizes them all, and as well with reference to secular as to sacred subjects; and for the reason that to the same extent the thoughts which are conceived and expressed in words, by the people of different countries, are thoughts of the same resemblances, analogies, comparisons, substitutions, and allegorical representations.

It is therefore apparent why, conformably to the intellectual and physical constitution, organization, capacities, and wants of man, words should be inspired into the minds of the sacred writers as they are used literally or figuratively, in ordinary speech and writing. There was the same reason for this as for inspiring the different kinds of words which belong to the different parts of speech, words in their inflected forms, and root words and their derivatives. The thoughts to be expressed could neither be conceived nor inspired, in any other way, any more than the same or other thoughts can now be otherwise conceived and expressed by uninspired men. The different parts of speech, and the different kinds, forms, and inflections of words, no more depend on the will or contrivance of man, than the different articulate sounds of which the vocal organs are capable, or the nature and variety of thoughts of which the intellect is capable. The words and thoughts are coëval and coincident;

spoken words are audible thoughts. We are so constituted, that it is impossible to convey thoughts from one mind to another, except by words, and signs equivalent to articulate vocal sounds. And, therefore, whatever thoughts were conveyed by inspiration so as to be received and understood by men, were of necessity conveyed in words as they are literally or figuratively used in ordinary speech and writing.

Language consists mainly of three classes of words—nouns, adjectives, and verbs, which follow each other in the order of our experience of sensational and intellectual observation and thought. The child first sees external objects, and hears and remembers their names. When they are out of sight he thinks of them in the words which are their names. Next he observes their qualities, and learns the qualifying words—adjectives—which express, discriminate, and limit them. Then he observes their actions, and learns their names—verbs—and their various applications with respect to time and other relations. The primary use of these several classes of words in their direct application or reference, is denominated their literal use. In their earliest form they are significantly described as root words; which like the roots of a tree are prolific of offshoots, derivatives, formed by changes of termination, and by prefixing or suffixing letters or syllables. In the English and other languages of equal copiousness, the derivatives are many times as numerous as the roots.

The differences between nouns, adjectives, and verbs are founded not in any thing in the words themselves, but in the differences between the thoughts which they represent; and the figurative use of them is founded,



not in any respect in the words nor in the subjects to which they relate, but in the resemblances between different thoughts, or thoughts of different subjects, acts, events, conditions, etc. When we say a bird flies, we use the verb in its primary and literal sense. When we say a ship flies, we use the verb in a secondary, deflected, or figured sense. There is a resemblance between the thought of motion in the one case and in the other. But it is not natural to a ship to fly, and to say that it flies is to say that its motion resembles that of a bird on the wing. When a word is used figuratively, it is used to represent a resemblance. A *figure* in rhetoric is a use of words in which their ordinary signification is deflected to express a resemblance. When we think of the motion of a bird flying in the air, we are conscious that its movement is real and natural, and we express our thoughts literally and exactly, by saying that it flies. When we think of the motion of a ship under sail, we are conscious that its movement is real and appropriate to the nature of the ship and the element on which it floats, and we express our thoughts literally and exactly by saying, that it *sails*. But there is a resemblance between the motion of the ship and that of the bird. And to express our thought of the ship's motion in a gale more forcibly than we can by the ordinary literal term, *sails*, we transfer our thought of the bird's motion, and say the ship flies.

These observations apply substantially to all the other figures of speech, as well as to the metaphor in the foregoing instance: to the comparison which merely affirms the likeness of one thing to another: to the

metonymy which applies the proper name of one thing to another which is in some respect similar or intimately connected; to the synecdoche, which applies the designation of part of a thing to the whole, or the name of the whole to a part, and so of the rest. They are all founded in resemblance in some particular or degree. The resemblances exist independently of words. They are subjects of thought; and the manner of expressing our thoughts of them, by the deflected or figurative use of words primarily and literally used to express our thoughts of analogous or resembling things, involves no necessary confusion or difficulty.

The imagination, the compound faculty of thinking and feeling, the intellectual and emotional powers conjointly exercised, may disport itself poetically with the resemblances in question, and with the figurative appropriation and use of words. But so long as it does not violate its own legitimate office, it will only render more intelligible and impressive, as well as more ornate and elegant, the thoughts expressed both in its literal and its figurative use of words.

In reference to the main subject of inquiry, it is apparent from these observations, that the inspiration into the minds of the sacred penmen, of words as they are figuratively used, is as necessary to convey the thoughts which they signify when so employed, and for the conveyance of which no other device has been discovered or can be conceived, as the inspiration of the same or other words to signify the simplest and most literal thoughts. Our intellectual, sensational, and vocal faculties are adapted to it. Our constitution, and the

nature and office of thoughts and words, equally demand it; since we have figurative as well as literal thoughts which are intimately connected and blended with each other. And beyond a question, if either class of thoughts or of words to represent and express them, were to be left to man's contrivance and selection, it would be the literal and not the figurative.

## CHAPTER XII.

**FALSE THEORY CONCERNING LANGUAGE, THAT WORDS REPRESENT THINGS INSTEAD OF THOUGHTS—PRIMARY BELIEFS—CONSCIOUSNESS.**

A PRINCIPAL fallacy which prevails concerning language, consists in supposing it to be the office of words to signify and represent *things*, instead of regarding it as their sole office to signify and represent *thoughts*. This erroneous supposition resulted very naturally from the prevalent theory concerning the origin of language as heretofore alluded to. On the assumptions, that man was at his creation as an infant; that the race continued in a state of barbarism till necessity compelled them to invent words whereby to signify their wants and wishes to each other; that the nature of their wants while in a state of barbarism, prompted them only to invent names for those things which were immediate objects of their senses; that those names turned out to be root words, from which all the other words of their language were derived; that the significance of the derivations was to be determined by ascertaining the significance of the root words; and that each tribe and nation invented a language for itself, and slowly emerged from mute and helpless ignor-

ance, some to the intelligence of picture writing, some to the dignity of unsyllabic marks, and some to the mysteries of hieroglyphs: on these assumptions it would be natural to infer that the root words, and by consequence and etymology that all words were merely signs of things. But every one of these assumptions is as palpably inconsistent with the nature and destiny of man as a thinking, voluntary, and accountable agent, as with the inspired words of God which inform us of man's creation, and of his primitive character and relations, and his acts and their issues.

The *meanings* affixed to words are the thoughts which the words are employed to express, and which we are conscious of and articulate, as representing the thoughts. Beyond that, words have in no degree a representative character. To suppose them to stand for things instead of thoughts, would be to exclude the thoughts which it is their nature and office to express. To constitute one thing the natural or constant sign or representative of another, there must be some correlative relation or connection. But no such relation in nature or by necessity exists between things and words. Things exist wholly independent of words. All things that are discoverable by our senses are discoverable without the aid of words. But when discovered, we can think of them only in words, by which, silently to our consciousness and audibly by vocal articulation, the words represent our thoughts as by a constitutional and uniform relation, and necessary connection. Accordingly, when the words are spoken or written, they signify the same thoughts to others as to ourselves.

The only color of plausibility apparent in the theory in question arises from the circumstance that the first words which children require and learn, are the names of those physical things which are the immediate objects of their senses. But it does not follow that because those words are the names of things, therefore it is their object to represent the things instead of the thoughts of the learner concerning them. They perfectly represent the thoughts, but they have no resemblance whatever to the things. They can be learned, and for the most part, as the child advances, are learned without his seeing or otherwise sensibly perceiving the things of which they are the names. As his thoughts multiply he learns new words, and as his stock of words is augmented his thoughts increase. Were his acquisition of words limited to the things perceived by his senses, he would never be able to speak or read a grammatical sentence. The very names of his senses, his affections, and emotions, and the qualities, peculiarities, conditions, relations, causes, uses, and effects of every thing external not within the observation of his senses, and every thing intellectual, moral, and spiritual would be entirely hidden from him, or be so dimly and confusedly indicated by uncertain prototypes and analogies as to confound his efforts. To imagine him to invent words even for the most familiar physical things before he had thoughts of them, would be absurd; and if he had thoughts to be expressed when he invented them, they would, of course, represent the thoughts by which they were prompted rather than the things to which the thoughts referred. But were it granted that some words stood for things, it is clear

that no variety of things or sensations could ever suggest or occasion the variety of words and the variety of their forms as parts of speech, and their declensions, moods, and tenses, which are required by connected thought, and grammatical expression. This orderly variety presupposes intellectual and organic laws as governing the formation of words, and undoubtedly it is in order to the perfect conception and expression of every variety and modification of thought, that the vocal organs under the influence of the understanding and the will, express the articulations, intonations, and inflections which constitute and discriminate the entire variety of words in each particular language. The process implies foresight, intention, and organic action.

The writers who regard words as signs of *things*, lose themselves in a labyrinth of factitious terms and distinctions. They begin by treating words as primarily mere sounds, like those naturally made by animals which have no verbal or acquired significance. But words are no further like those natural sounds, than they are like whistling and coughing. On the contrary, words are *articulate* sounds, of which animals are incapable; sounds of which the articulation is the effect, conjointly, of the intellect, the will, and the vocal organs, exerted purposely to express the thoughts which it is their office respectively to embody and convey. They involve intelligence, discrimination, and design, and have a particular significance to the consciousness of the utterer, before he articulates them. He utters them to express not mere sounds, but to express the thoughts previously couched in them in his mind. To say that they owe their signification to conventional

agreement is nonsense, if any thing more is meant by that than that those who use the same words use them at different times to express the same thoughts, for the reason that they have the same thoughts to express, and not for the reason that any convention of men ever agreed upon a meaning to be affixed to unmeaning sounds. The articulation of words preceded the possibility of any such convention. Children learn to articulate and to express their thoughts in words, by hearing others articulate, and learning from them the meaning of the words which they utter, so that they can think the same thoughts in the same words.

Those writers instead of regarding words as organic utterances indissolubly connected with thoughts from the earliest exercise of the mind in thinking, and the earliest exercise of the vocal organs in articulation, regard them as sounds invented by men, to which, by after agreement, they annex a meaning to signify particular *things*. Hence their notion of their uncertainty and insufficiency. Because the meaning so annexed to particular words—that is, sounds—does not signify all that belongs to particular things, their names, natures, qualities, acts, conditions, and effects, and all that the imagination can conceive respecting them, they regard them as imperfect and uncertain, and fancy themselves to be at liberty, and to be competent, to remedy the defect by annexing further meanings and varying the signification. Or else, on the other hand, they treat them as inherently dubious and inadequate, and fancy an arcana of meanings in *things* which the intellect perceives or imagines, but which words, owing to their paucity and the limited and imperfect meanings which



have been annexed to them, are incompetent to express. Thus Mr. Locke: "The names of substances would be much more useful, and propositions made in them, much more certain, were the real essences of substances the *ideas* in our minds, which those words signified. And it is for want of those real essences, that our words convey so little knowledge or certainty in our discourses about them; and, therefore, the mind to remove that imperfection as much as it can, makes them, by a secret supposition, to stand for a thing having that real essence, as if thereby it made some nearer approaches to it." (Book 3, chap. 10.) These *non-verbal*, unspoken meanings are supposed to lie beneath those which our words signify. What they are, of course can not be told. Were we but conscious of them in thought, we should undoubtedly have words whereby distinctly to express them, as we have for all other thoughts. Were they founded in feelings or emotions, we should think of them in words as we do in all other instances. In their nature, probably, they are either mythical or figurative in the sense in which it is so common with commentators to treat the words of our language when they are used in Scripture without a figure.

But suppose it to be true that there is in the objects of sensation something which our senses do not report to us so that we can express it in existing words, or in any possible words; and something in the like predicament also, in our internal feelings, and in our intellectual cogitations, of what imaginable use could it be to us to be certified of that fact, any more than to be certified that there are metals in the bowels of the earth

which can not be detected by our senses, and creatures in the stars whose thoughts and feelings are such as our words are inadequate to describe? All we can say concerning such occult, nameless, and imperceptible things, is that, *by the supposition, they exist*. That thought we have words to express. Beyond that we know nothing of such supposed things. We are not conscious of them, for we have words to express every thing of which we are distinctly conscious. They can have no possible connection with our practical conduct, or our obligations; for if they had, we should be conscious of them and act voluntarily in relation to them. To fancy that we have intellectual apprehensions and thoughts of them, is but to indicate a state of mind like that in which some fancy that they hear inaudible sounds and see things without light, or which are beyond the range of vision. Yet what years and folios, from age to age, have been wasted in evading and explaining away the realities of our organic, constitutional, conscious, and responsible existence, actions, and relations, by the light of things unknown to us, and which are beneath or above the province and power of language! Language, created to be as perfect and reliable a medium and exponent of our thoughts as the eye is of sights, and the ear of sounds, how has it been perverted and stultified by the reveries of false philosophy and the cravings of lawless imagination!

What theories and speculations have ruled the world, in opposition to the Scriptures, and in contradiction to the consciousness of men!

Our consciousness of what exists and takes place within us, is the ground of all our intellectual and

moral convictions and beliefs. Our consciousness, though it includes involuntary sensations and feelings, rests not in those auxiliaries of the intellect; but centres itself upon the thoughts, the distinct successive cogitations, which are connected with the will, and for which therefore we are responsible. Back of these cogitations is the soul, the cogitative agent, with its intellectual and executive power of thinking and willing, and those inherent, constitutional principles, or beliefs, which are the basis of all acquired knowledge—the prerequisite condition, as truly as any attribute of the soul, of all cogitative exercise of the intellect. They are that in the nature and constitution of the soul, without which thinking would have no point from which to start—no basis on which to rest; reasoning no absolute, indubitable, undemonstrable first truths from which to advance, or in which to terminate; belief no insurmountable barriers; consciousness and volition no rule of discrimination. Thinking, reasoning, belief, and consciousness, proceed upon them, as existing, admitted, and incontrovertible. Without them as its platform, the intellect could not distinctly and with confident certainty cogitate any thing. They are to cogitation what the axioms of mathematics are to the science built upon them—foundation truths without which the superstructure could not be erected. And they coëxist with that in our constitution which makes words the matrix and medium of our thoughts, to enable us to conceive, express, and remember them.

Among these constitutional intuitions, is that by which the mind, in view of a known law or standard, decides, as by a necessary and resistless impulse, that

its voluntary cogitations and acts are good or bad, and thereby affords indubitable evidence that we are responsible for our thoughts as well as for our acts, because they equally involve the concurrent agency of the will. To the working of such a constitution, and in order to our consciousness of what we think as well as of what we do, words are an indispensable adjunct and instrument; and they are therefore provided or attainable, to an extent and in such forms as to be commensurate to all our thoughts. In harmony with all the parts of our being, organic and voluntary, intellectual, physical, and moral; they are essential conditions of our existence as moral, social, and accountable creatures, and directly concern our relations to the Creator, to spiritual and material things, and to one another. And they are accordingly the medium, not only of our own thoughts, but the vehicle selected by Infinite Wisdom for the revelation of His will to us. To distrust them as such medium, and treat them as inadequate to their office, is not less preposterous and is far more criminal, than to distrust the adequacy of the visual organ for its purpose, and to set at naught the testimony of our senses.

The organ of vision performs a single peculiar function, that of seeing external objects; the ear also, and the other organs of sensation, each has a single peculiar function. But the action of the cogitative agent, to which these isolated and restricted organs are in their limited sphere auxiliary, is by means of words far more extended and comprehensive. By the senses certain informations are received into the mind so as to be objects of thought. But by means of words all our

thoughts are conceived, realized to our consciousness, remembered and reproduced, audibly expressed and heard, committed to writing and read, and repeated, re-written, and re-remembered, by those who hear and read them. Their instrumentality is thus pervading and permanent. Words are to the soul, in respect to all its cogitations, in their inception, and in the consciousness, and recollection, and the vocal and written expression of them, what light is to the visual and sound to the auditory organ.

The body with its organs is the physical instrument of the soul for certain purposes of the present life, among which the education of the mind and heart is the principal. In this, in all respects, and at every step, words are the instruments of the understanding and the will. As the body grows, and as the informations of sensational experience are multiplied, the exercise of thought advances, and words are a growing necessity; and the acquisition, use, and memory of them keeps pace with the progress of every branch of knowledge.

The soul is an organism separable from the body, and as such has constitutionally certain intuitive perceptions and principles which, like elements and vitality, are at the base of all intellectual and voluntary exercises of the mind, and which will survive the shock of death and all changes of the material organs. Among these are such propositions as, "I exist"—"a first cause, a self-existent, an infinite, a God, exists." These affirmative axioms and the correlate negations, like the axioms of mathematics to the intellect, are to the soul native organic beliefs, as necessarily prerequi-

site to thinking, reasoning, and reflecting, as that primordial faculty which we call the understanding.

They are of the nature of the soul, as holiness is of the nature of unfallen creatures and of renewed man—a basis and prerequisite of right action; a basis on which cogitation proceeds and volition arbitrates and determines. By their nature, if unstified and unperverted, they are a test of right and wrong in all that we think and do. But cogitation founded on them takes place only by the instrumentality of words as its medium and vehicle. Words, therefore, are as necessary to a being formed to think, as the eye is to one formed to see; and those who articulate words intelligently and honestly, as perfectly express their thoughts, as those perfectly discern visible objects who open their eyes. And but for the confusion which in metaphysics and philosophy has arisen from the notion that words represent *things* instead of *thoughts*, the Divine institution, office, purpose, and use of words would have been better understood; innumerable errors would have been precluded; plenary verbal inspiration of the Scriptures would have been perceived to be necessary from the nature and office of language and the constitution of man; no words would be treated as figurative which did not denote a figure and express a deflected meaning; and no man would be satisfied with the fancy, that particular words signified thoughts which they did not express, nor excuse himself by pretending that he verily thought one thing while his words expressed another.

Unhappily the great effort of a large succession of writers has been, under cover of their notion of the

human origin, imperfection, inadequacy, and uncertainty of language, their total ignorance of the nature of figures, the blinding inspirations of false philosophy, and the deceitfulness and corruption of their hearts—to unsettle and pervert the meaning of words, and destroy all confidence in language.

In all our reasonings concerning the soul we must regard it as an entity possessing the attributes necessary to all the phenomena exhibited in its acts under the conditions and in the relations in which it exists. Now one of its conditions is that of union with an organized physical body, and among its relations are those to the Creator, to other human creatures, and to the external world. In order to its action relatively to external things, the eye, the ear, and other physical organs are its instruments. In order to its action of thought, volition, reflection, memory, and consciousness, in its relations to its Creator, Benefactor, Lawgiver, Redeemer, and Judge, and to its fellow-creatures, words are the constituted medium and instrument; and for the ends intended to be answered by them, they are no less perfect than the senses are for their respective offices. Hence in our relations to God, His commands and instructions are expressed to us in words; and all our thoughts towards Him, our thoughts of reverence, adoration, confidence, and love, of obligations and duties, of gratitude and praise, of supplication and thanksgiving, are conceived and expressed in words. By words we impart our thoughts to each other, and by the inspiration of words the Divine thoughts were conveyed to the sacred penmen.

Their mission is coëxtensive with cogitation in all

the conditions and relations of rational creatures. They are the constituted medium of intercourse between heaven and earth, and between men remote from each other, as well as when locally near on earth. The transmissions of intelligence by post and by electric subserviency, is the transmission of thoughts in words. They are the vehicle of collective thought, of compacts, covenants, treaties, laws, judicial trials, testimony; of associated action in societies, in churches, and in ecclesiastical and political bodies. They are the test of integrity and character. By their words men are to be justified, and by their words they are to be condemned.

The whole number of languages is reckoned at about three thousand. Of these the English is supposed to be the most copious, having about eighty thousand words. But the number of radical words does not exceed about seven or eight to the hundred, the remainder being formed by joining roots together and by derivation. Now the manner in which this vast disproportion of compounds and derivatives to roots is effected, necessitates the conclusion that they were not devised to represent things, but were required only to express new and modified thoughts by new and modified articulations of vocal sounds, extending to all the varieties, and marking all the resemblances and shades of thought. To imagine them, and the derivatives especially, which are by far the most numerous class in the vocabulary, to have been devised, and a meaning assigned to them to represent such varieties and diversities of things, is simply absurd. For, to assign no other reason, they are formed by the annexation of prefixes and suffixes to the root words, in a systematic



and orderly manner in perfect accordance with the organic operation of our intellectual and physical constitution, and so as to express number, gender, case, tense, and person, which are not sensible properties of things, but requisites and products of thought and language.

The fallacy of one leading class of writers on what they are pleased to call the *philosophy* of language, and on the etymologies of the English tongue, arises, as is observed above, from their assumption that language is of human contrivance—that words were first employed, like pictures, as representative of things, and that their subsequent and present significance is legitimate and correct only so far as it coincides or is identical with the original signification. Such is the basis of the ingenious speculations of Mr. Horne Tooke. Whereas, on the contrary, since it is the office of words to express thoughts, the question with respect to particular words is, what thoughts they are now employed to express, not what the same words, or their roots, were originally employed to signify. Nothing can be more obvious than that a particular word may perfectly express a certain thought at one period, and as perfectly express a different thought, or shade of thought, at another period. The etymology of words may illustrate the progress of transition in their use, and thereby often illustrate the progress or decline of thoughts, and of knowledge, ignorance, and error, but can be no criterion of the propriety with which particular words are used to express different thoughts at different periods. And hence we may infer the infinite importance of the infallibility of the words of Scripture. The

thoughts which they express are unchangeably the same, and therefore behoove ever to be expressed in the same words.

The fallacy of another system—that of Locke and his followers—arises from the assumptions, that our sources of knowledge are limited to sensation and reflection, and that *ideas*, which he holds to be the objects of thought, are images of external things existing in our minds and impressing them; which assumptions, besides finally resolving every thing into mere consciousness of the ideas or operations of the mind, and inevitably resulting in idealism, made no provision for those primary intuitions and beliefs which are native to the mind and are bases of its action; nor for the knowledge conveyed in the words of Divine inspiration. It is apparent that according to this theory, language must be defective and uncertain to the same extent that the images or copies of external existences which are assumed to subsist in the mind, fail to correspond to the natures, modes, and relations of the things which they are assumed to represent.

According to the theories of Aristotle, Des Cartes, Locke, and their followers, *ideas* formed and existing in the mind, were images, phantasms of things external to the mind, and as such were the immediate objects of thought, and the medium by which the perception, real or imaginary, of external objects is effected. They seem not to have considered that in such a relation thought and knowledge—conscious thought and conscious knowledge—are identical. That which we think of an external object, is that which we have learned, and conceived, and know concerning it.

If we know nothing of a particular external object, we can have no thoughts concerning it, nor concerning any representative image of it in the mind: we can not be conscious of such image, nor can it exist, or be the object of thought or the medium of perception. For that which we previously know of an external object, must be the basis of the supposed image, and must precede the formation of it. The object itself, therefore, must have been the immediate object of thought, before it was possible for the mind to fabricate the image. Such image, then, could not be the medium of such prior thought, and if formed, could not supersede the object itself as the immediate object of thought.

In their discussions they more or less confounded *thoughts* and what they denominated *ideas*; and they seem to have mistaken what they called ideas, for what the mind is conscious of by the conception of thoughts in words. They overlooked the office and relations of words as the medium, instrument, and representative of thought. If, instead of taking it for granted that there can be no thoughts without the supposed *ideal images* as their medium, they had realized that there can be no thoughts except in words as their medium, their speculations would have been relieved from their first and chiefest difficulty, and might have been in harmony with our experience and our consciousness. They would have held that what we actually perceive by means of our senses, must as really and certainly exist as we exist and have the capacity of perception. The Peripatetic, instead of saying, 'I perceive the *form* of an object which comes directly from it, and

makes an impression upon my mind, as a seal makes an impression upon wax;' and the Cartesian, instead of saying, 'I perceive an image, form, or idea of the object, in my own mind,' would respectively say, 'I perceive the object itself, by means of the senses which are a part of my nature and constitution for that very purpose.' And on the other hand, instead of saying, 'We think immediately of the ideal images in our minds,' they would say, 'We think immediately of the objects themselves which we have perceived by our senses; but we think in words which, though they are not images of external objects, and have no resemblance or relation to them, are the necessary medium and instrument of thought, and perfectly signify, express, and convey, all our thoughts upon each and every subject.'

These erroneous theories have exerted a powerful and enduring sway, notwithstanding their palpable inconsistency with facts and with all practical experience in the use of language. They have been rendered current by the authority of names, and by the suffrages of teachers and writers, given without examination or suspicion. That they are erroneous, unfounded, and in a very high degree injurious, however, scarcely needs to be more than stated to be felt and acknowledged. For not only are the words of speakers and writers consciously and solely employed to express their thoughts, but for the most part they have no reference whatever to visible or other objects of the senses. And it seems impossible that they should be imagined to represent things, except upon the footing of idealism, which assumes that things themselves

have no existence out of the mind. The definitions of words in our dictionaries, which are given to express and illustrate the thoughts represented by the respective words, are not descriptions of things, but expressions of the same thoughts in different but equivalent words. Words may describe things by expressing our thoughts concerning them; but material forms and pictures only can stand as their representatives.

It is in the high province of metaphysics to treat of the properties and affections of all beings. In relation to the human mind, however, the range of inquiry and observation is limited to that of which the mind itself is conscious. But in this department of metaphysical investigation, the writers seem, from first to last, to have overlooked the fact, that we are as conscious of words, and of thoughts only in words, as we are of sensations; and that we remember our thoughts, and equally our sensations, only in the words by which we express them to others. The Aristotelian and Cartesian doctrine which ruled in the schools of learning more than two thousand years, that our ideas are copies of external things impressed on our minds by sensation; as seals are impressed on wax, seems to have wholly diverted the attention of philosophers and ontologists from words of which we are conscious as the element and condition of thought, to an imaginary notion of which no one is or can be conscious.

Undoubtedly, except by constitutional intuition, and Divine inspiration, we neither know nor can know any thing of mind, but by its own consciousness. We are conscious of sensations by means of our senses. We are conscious of thoughts by means of words. Such

consciousness is common to all, and as much and as reliably within the observation of one as of another. It is not, like matter, a subject of experiment and analysis; and is realized not by scientific inquiry, but by intellectual observation. It may be the subject of observation more, indefinitely, to some than to others; but the truth of whatever may be said respecting the mind, must be determined by an appeal to consciousness. And hence may be seen the admirable wisdom and goodness of the Creator, in providing words as the medium of conscious and responsible thought, whereby each individual is a microcosm, a world in himself, independently of the learning of philosophers and the theories and systems of science: conditioned to be a rational and accountable agent, independently of all other created agents; and capable of receiving, by inspired words, the knowledge of things out of and far above the natural sphere of his personal consciousness.

The first, and by far the most important, problem in mental philosophy, relates to our constitutional intuitions, or those primary principles, which are as much of the nature of the soul, as understanding, will, or any of its constitutional properties. That those constitutional principles, or beliefs, exist, are among the conditions precedent to cogitation, and are realized and felt to be authoritative coincidently with the cogitative and responsible exercises of the mind, is undeniable, and is generally acknowledged. Nor is it any more incredible or wonderful that they should be of the nature of a thinking and responsible agent, than that the capacity of feeling, thinking, and willing should be of the nature of such an agent, and be realized and mani-

fested from the first dawn of experience. Like latent heat in matter which becomes sensible by experiment, they are in the constitution of the soul, to be realized by the exercise of its faculties; as understanding, will, and other faculties, are of the nature of the soul, and are realized by the rational exercise of its powers. They are involuntary, spontaneous, necessary convictions, feelings, beliefs, arising in such variety and in such relations as are demanded by the voluntary acts of the mind: the elements and groundwork of cogitation. These primordial facts, feelings, beliefs, are elements of our mental constitution and conditions of our acquired knowledge, and must, therefore, be regarded by us as ultimate and true. For if not so regarded, then no fact of which we are conscious, can for that reason be held to be true, and we, therefore, can have no certainty that any thing is true.

The congruity of these original principles, as being of the nature of the soul, with the acquisition of knowledge by instruction, and the concurrent exercise of the understanding and the will, in thinking and reasoning, both corroborates and illustrates the reality of their existence, their indispensableness, and their spontaneity. They are in harmony with the earliest intellectual perceptions in children, as the mechanism of the eye is preadjusted and in harmony with their earliest visual perceptions. Without that preëxistence and adjustment of the visual organ, the access of light and of physical objects would be in vain. Without the preëxistence and spontaneous coaction of these original principles, the access of excitements to think, reflect, and reason, would be ineffectual. Their spontaneous

realization and harmony with the first intellectual perceptions, accords with the synthetic, which, in distinction from the analytic, is the natural and necessary mode of primary instruction. In effect they are to the mind, what optical preadjustment is to the eye: and as the most simple and familiar objects only, are first observed and discriminated by the visual faculty, so the simplest facts of sensation, which, as subjects of thought, imply certain preëxistent and necessary facts or principles, are those first brought to the notice of the intellect. As the progress of instruction and experience supplies new thoughts, their antecedent correlates are spontaneously evolved.

The doctrine of second causes, which unavoidably results from the Scripture doctrine, concerning The First Cause, involves what is asserted of the existence, operation, and relations of these original principles. All created existences are the product of the First Cause. But, in creatures, all operations and changes which are not supernatural, proceed from the laws and forces of dependent causation which belongs to their constitution as creatures. Thus the laws and forces of matter are causes, not merely antecedents, of their uniform and appropriate effects. Their existence is manifested by the effects which, under the proper conditions, they uniformly produce. Their limited potency, and the uniformity of their effects, prove that they are of the nature of matter; so that, so far as we know or can conceive, matter, organized physical substances, do not and can not exist without them. Free agents also are causes of appropriate effects under the proper conditions. The effects which are realized to their con-



consciousness by the free exercise of their agency in thinking, demonstrate to them the existence of these inherent principles of their nature. For it is only in the act of thinking, that they have any consciousness of these native principles, facts, and beliefs. Thinking spontaneously causes this consciousness, and the further consciousness or perception, of the agreement or disagreement of their thoughts with those constitutional principles. The effects thus caused at pleasure by a dependent free agent demonstrate the existence in his nature of the principles in question.

But the existence of these primary beliefs proves, on the one hand, that we do not acquire all our knowledge from sensation; and on the other, that words are the true exponent, vehicle, and measure of our conscious thoughts; whether they be thoughts which originate in our own minds, or thoughts conveyed to us by our fellow-men, or in the words of inspiration. For they attest the coincidence between the thoughts of which we are conscious and the words in which they are conceived by us, and by which we receive them from or express them to others. Without extrinsic proof or verbal demonstration, we necessarily believe the identity of our thoughts with the meaning of the words in which we conceive them, or by which they are conveyed to us. The Cartesian postulate, 'I *think*, therefore, I exist,' asserts a fact, namely, that we are conscious of thought. But we are not more conscious of that fact than we are of the word by which we express it. The correlation of the fact and word, and the inference *I exist*, are intuitions, beliefs, coëval with the premise, and necessary concomitants of it, existing in

the mind antecedently to any formal statement or induction.

Our perception of an external object of sensation is immediately attended not only by a consciousness that we perceive that object, but by a conscious knowledge that the object perceived is separate and distinct from ourselves. That knowledge is the awakened intuitive response of the soul, and includes the reality and the externality of the object, and its distinctness from other objects; and it embodies itself, or is conceived in words, and is at once a basis of reasoning, induction, and action. Sensation, which evermore precedes the perception of external objects, is thus auxiliary to intellectual perception and consciousness. It furnishes a point of information, a key-note, answerable to which the constitutional principles, the normal beliefs of the soul, concerning what relates to the object perceived, become subjects of consciousness. The same is true equally of intellectual conceptions. Every sensational perception, and every intellectual conception, implies certain correlate or necessary truths, which it does not express or comprise; but of which the soul becomes immediately conscious. Our conscious, intuitive belief of the externality of physical objects, is as unequivocal, and of course as much to be relied on, as our consciousness that we perceive those objects. But our sensational perception of such objects does not include their externality. That, and other things which may be predicated of them, and equally of intellectual conceptions, is an intuition of which the mind becomes conscious as perceptions take place.

Now that the soul should be endowed with such

original principles, cognitions, beliefs, and become conscious of them when prompted by sensational or intellectual perceptions, is in no degree more remarkable than that it should be so constituted as to conceive particular thoughts, and to perceive particular objects, or than that it should have the normal capacity of perceiving under appropriate conditions, the qualities of right and wrong in moral actions, and of experiencing consequent emotions corresponding to its moral judgments. The very notion of an intelligent rational agent, implies the endowments or powers in question. They are of man's nature as an intellectual, rational, and moral being. Among all these normal cognitions there is nothing more incredible or mysterious than what every one is conscious of in his intuitive beliefs, that part of a thing is not equal to the whole, that an effect must have a cause, a contrivance a contriver, a creature a creator.

But our perceptions of external objects which are consequent on sensations, our intellectual conceptions, the emotions awakened by them, and our primary beliefs in connection with all these mental exercises, are realized to our consciousness in words, and not otherwise, that is, in words mentally or orally articulated. Words are their medium and vesture, the condition of their being remembered, and the vehicle by which alone they can be expressed to others. It is the office of words, therefore, to represent the thoughts of which we are conscious, and not their office to represent the external physical objects of sensation, which are out of the sphere of our consciousness, and which are perceived by the mind only through the organic instrumentality of the senses.

That in the constitution of the soul, by reason of which we are conscious of thought, is that by reason of which we are coincidentally conscious of the words in which our thoughts are contained, and of their correlation and identity of significance. It results spontaneously from the nature, constitution, capacity of the soul that we should be conscious of words when we think, as we are conscious of light when we open our eyes, and of articulate sounds when words are audibly spoken or read in our hearing. Such consciousness is the ground, or prerequisite condition of our understanding, discriminating, and comprehending any thing, internal or external. Hence, without further disquisition in this direction, we may perceive the absolute necessity of the joint inspiration of thoughts and words.

Revelation is addressed not to a particular faculty of our minds, but to our whole nature as rational and accountable agents. It consists of facts and laws, injunctions and prohibitions, instructions and illustrations, challenging instant faith and obedience on our part. When these are presented to the mind in words, our intellectual and moral nature responds to their reality and truth as verbally expressed, in like manner and for the same reason that the dormant constitutional beliefs of those to whom no Divine revelation is made in words, are quickened and rendered efficient so as to subject them to moral obligation, and render their disobedience inexcusable, when they behold the works of creation which intelligibly manifest the invisible things, even the eternal power and Godhead of the Creator. (Rom. 1 : 20.)

It is of the nature of the soul, and in order to its action as a moral agent, to have various capacities, susceptibilities and powers, all of which, like his senses, are dormant till excited by some appropriate instrumentality. This is equally manifest in the education of children, and in the experience of adults. But when quickened they spontaneously attest the correlation and congruity of that which they deliver with that which excites them. The correlation of words and thoughts is thus attested; and therefore inspired thoughts imply inspired words, and demonstrate the importance of the words employed as the matrix and counterpart of the thoughts conveyed. And since words are naturally the instrument of thought and of intercourse among men, since they are the vehicle of revelation, and of intercourse between man and his Creator, and since the thoughts which he conceives and is conscious of in words during the present life, he is to remember in the future, we may infer that words are forever to be the medium and instrument of his thoughts.

## CHAPTER XIII.

PRACTICAL BEARINGS OF THE SUBJECT—PERVERSIONS  
OF LANGUAGE.

THE bearing, on the instruction of the young, of what has been advanced concerning the ministry of words, is too obvious to require any extended illustration. It is not only of the first importance to teach them the exact meaning of words, that they may ever after serve as stereotype patterns of their thoughts; but to teach them especially, those words which immediately concern their highest relations as accountable creatures, their obligations and duties, their spiritual and eternal interests. Such words indelibly printed on the memory, are as beacons and landmarks. They form the nucleus of association, the waiting handmaid and instrument of thought. They are to be taught not merely as the means of present instruction and impression, but that they may have a fixed and permanent lodgment in the understanding, be remembered and recalled, and taught by each one to his sons and his sons' sons. Such is declared by Moses to have been the purpose of the announcements at Sinai, amidst the most imposing and awakening external circumstances. "Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently,

lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons: specially the day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb, when the Lord said unto me, Gather Me the people together, and I will make them hear MY WORDS, that they may learn to fear Me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children. And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness. And the Lord SPAKE unto you out of the midst of the fire: Ye heard the VOICE OF THE WORDS, but saw no similitude: only ye heard a VOICE. And He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even ten commandments: and HE WROTE them upon two tables of stone." (Deut. 4.) Again: "These WORDS which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt WRITE them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." (Deut. 6.)

Conformably to this view of the importance of the verbal instruction of the young, and in addition to the special and imperative injunction upon parents, the tribe of Levi was set apart to study, explain, and copy the words of the Law, and distributed among the other

tribes to teach them. The priests and judges were to learn them thoroughly. The kings were each to write a copy of them, and to read them all the days of their lives; and it is said prospectively of those who should turn from transgression: "My spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever." (Isa. 59.)

The same observations are in like manner applicable to verbal formularies, creeds, and confessions, as to particular words. The Scriptures consist of words which "principally teach, what man is to believe concerning God, and what duties God requires of man;" and brief summaries of what they teach, in statements, and propositions in sentences in which particular words are combined in grammatical form and succession, are no less necessary and important to be taught, understood, and remembered, than any particular words in their special relations. The sacred oracles accordingly abound in brief statements or propositions which are to be believed, and in brief and emphatic precepts, and rules of life, like the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and all the didactic portions of both Testaments; from a collection and summary of which the Westminster Confession and Catechism, and all other evangelical creeds and confessions, are formed. They comprehensively fulfill the office of words, as the medium of associated thoughts; and their use is sanctioned in Scripture both directly and by the quotation in the New of particular formularies from the Old. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and



in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10.) "God is a Spirit and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth.—There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.—Christ died for our sins, and rose again for our justification.—Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.—The just shall live by faith.—We shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." These are examples of Scripture formularies, in the sense referred to. But, even on the most essential points of doctrine, they are, in the sacred record, so frequently repeated in different connections, that a summary of them, like that of the Westminster Assembly, may be said to be equally necessary, commendable and advantageous. Like the formula of baptism, and the hallelujahs, and doxologies of true worshippers both on earth and in heaven, they concisely represent connected thoughts on the most exalted subjects.

What the Scriptures teach they teach in the words which were inspired and written. They teach nothing beyond that. They have no spiritual or concealed meaning. Those words intelligibly conveyed the intended thoughts. Hence the great importance everywhere attached in Scripture to the original words, as being all alike inspired, and of Divine authority. To add to them or detract from them was to incur an ana-

thema. "Every word of God is pure—add thou not to His words lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." (Prov. 30.) "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life." (Rev. 22.)

The original words were the standard, as infallibly expressing the meaning of the Revealer. To teach and understand this meaning correctly, was therefore of the first importance; and it is of no less importance now than at any former period, and no less important in translations than it was to those to whom the originals were vernacular. The translator who correctly understands the words of the originals, and the equivalent words of his version, may convey the same thoughts with the latter which were inspired with the former. It follows from the nature and office of words, as the moulds and instruments of thought, that words in one tongue—words articulated in one manner—may as perfectly as those of any other tongue, express the same thoughts; and that words perfectly synonymous with others in the same language, may be substituted for each other, without necessary or essential disparagement to the thoughts to be conveyed.

Hence the various readings which are discovered by comparison of manuscript copies of the originals are practically of no consideration; since, though numerous in the later copies, they are fewer in those of older date; and in every instance, the substituted word is shown by collation with the corresponding word in other

and older copies, in the same and other places, to be of equivalent signification, or at least to differ more in sound than in sense; that is, the various readings, so far as new words are introduced, are translations of the original words, into other words of the same language; occasioned probably by inadvertence, the copyist having the true thought expressed it in a parallel instead of the original word. Most of the variations between different copies are of letters only; but neither in respect to them, nor to those of words, is there any evidence of corrupt design or of collusion, on the part of copyists; separated as they were in time and place, and independent of each other. Even the manuscripts which are least esteemed, contain every doctrine of faith, every moral precept, and every important historical fact, that is found in the best, and nothing of a contrary and inconsistent nature. Hence the consistency of our Saviour and His Apostles, when quoting from the Old Testament, in sometimes using the version of the Seventy, as conveying in those cases, the thoughts of the original, and being familiar, probably, to their hearers and readers, instead of always directly translating from the Hebrew into Syriac, or into Greek.

A faithful translation of the Scriptures from the original text into another language, may, to the reader who correctly understands that language, have the same authority as the original had to those to whom that was vernacular. A faithful translation expresses the thoughts of the original in the words of the version. The translator must correctly conceive the inspired thoughts both in the words of the text and in the words of his version. To him, therefore, they will have the same

authority in the one as in the other. If he so understands the original words as correctly to conceive the thoughts in them, his reader can so understand the words of his version as to conceive the thoughts in those words, as correctly as the translator could conceive and understand them in the original words.

The words are as truly the vehicle of the thoughts in the one case as in the other. The question as to the words is, whether they correctly signify and express the thoughts. If the translator is competent, and selects the proper words, they can not fail to express and convey the thoughts to the same effect and with the same authority as the original. If he fails to do this, or is charged with having failed, and controversy ensues, appeal is made to the original text, to determine whether in that he rightly conceived the inspired thought, or whether he misconceived it, and therefore failed to substitute the proper word to convey that thought in his translation. Inspiration is no more necessary to a faithful translator, than it was to a right understanding of the original text by those who were contemporary with the sacred writers and spoke the same language.

The preceding observations concerning the importance of teaching the meaning of words of truth, as the vehicle of right thoughts, suggest the obligation and importance of withholding the young from hearing or reading impious and corrupt words, which are the vehicle of evil thoughts.

All the corruptions and perversions of language have resulted from the apostasy of man. His heart being alienated and corrupt, every imagination of the thoughts of his heart became evil. Out of the heart

proceed evil thoughts. Evil thoughts require perverted and corrupt words; and in so far as such words are learnt by hearing and reading, they convey the thoughts to the understandings of the learners. Evil communications corrupt good manners. Profanity, impurity, lying, deceiving, hatred, malice, cruelty, and all the forms of internal and external wickedness, have words which distinctively express them. The perversion of words to a false, immoral, and corrupt use, like heresies and false theories, proceeds from the father of lies, who, when he speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own. Evil words with evil thoughts are of the inspiration of the evil one, who was a lying spirit in the mouth of the false prophets, who tempted Ananias and Sapphira, and put it into the heart of Judas to betray his Master. The first thought of murder doubtless came to Cain from that wicked one, who was a murderer from the beginning; as the first thought of the primeval transgression was directly of his suggestion. New forms of wickedness, subsequently, are treated as of his device and instigation—idolatry and the abominations associated with it—witchcraft, sorcery, divinations, magic, and the like; violence, persecution, war; falsehood, detraction, intolerance, tyranny, and all evil principles and passions. All these things, and their qualities, and the acts to which they relate, have verbal designations and terms of qualification and action, which are perverted from their primeval signification and use, or are devised for their purpose as instruments of evil thoughts; by means of which the prince of the power of the air rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience. In his vocabulary are treasured up and pre-

served all the evil thoughts of fallen creatures of ancient and modern times ; as in the words of truth and virtue, are embalmed the thoughts of wisdom and goodness. In both instances the thoughts of successive generations are conceived, remembered, and expressed, as the meaning of the words—the knowledge of the instruments—is attained by hearing or reading. But as the hearts of all are corrupt and infested with evil propensities and passions, the words of evil are most congenial and most welcome to them, and gain the firmest lodgment in the memory, and are most easily quickened and recalled to recollection.

The perversion of words originally truthful and virtuous in their signification, to corrupt and immoral uses, and the introduction of new words of good or bad significance, or merely as instruments of increasing knowledge in science and arts, are rapid and easy under some circumstances, and under others slow and difficult. The intellectual and physical constitution and organization of man, involves a like capacity of forming new words—new vocal articulations—as of conceiving new thoughts. The power of naming all the objects of sensation and of thought, and of expressing their relations and their agencies, is lodged in the constitution of man, to be exercised according to his exigencies and the objects which engross his attention. Thus as the Greeks and Romans emerged from ignorance and barbarism to civilization and refinement, and with the progress of their military conquests, advanced in commerce and arts, in literature and science, and in wealth and luxury, their objects of thought were vastly multiplied, and their language was proportionably en-

riched with new formed and appropriate words. When the Pagan nations of the Roman empire were first taught the knowledge of Christianity, the adoption of its peculiar words, for which they had no equivalents, or the formation of new ones, in their place, was indispensable to their reception and expression of its thoughts. And in modern times, the discoveries and culture of new sciences and arts—as chemistry, geology, electricity, the use of steam—demanded new words for new thoughts, concerning objects, relations, and agencies which were before unknown. The supply of such demand, is a necessity; and results from man's intellectual and physical organization, his endowments and exigencies as a rational being, as his seeing new objects results from their exposure, under appropriate conditions, to his faculty of vision.

Without such exigencies and stimulants, man, as history testifies of the Egyptians, the Persians, Greeks, and other once cultivated nations, degenerates in all respects, and as he declines in respect to the objects of his attention and pursuit, his thoughts decline, and the words in which they were conceived and expressed are dropped and forgotten; and if the vocal articulation of his words is not essentially changed, his retained and current language becomes meagre and debased.

In a quiet and stationary condition of things among a people whose language is already cultivated and affluent, scarcely any thing is more difficult than to introduce and give currency and authority to new words in place of those already sanctioned by good usage; and for the reason that no exigency is felt to demand it.

Language is, in respect to the articulation, pronunciation, orthography, and signification of words at any given period, just what is taught at that period, to those who speak and write it. It is an acquisition; and as entirely the effect of instruction and study to one as another. All alike must learn the alphabet, the syllables, the vocal expression, pronunciation, spelling, signification, reading. As they learn these things, they learn the thoughts signified by the words which they spell, pronounce, and read. The thoughts and words are thus associated and remembered together. New thoughts are learnt as the signification of new words. As the stock of remembered thoughts and words is augmented, the power of voluntary thought is enlarged so as ever to be coëxtensive with the previously acquired knowledge of words.

Hence if the teaching is not in all respects essentially the same at one period as at another, the result will be manifest in the improved or the degenerated state of the language. Thus the English language has been greatly changed and improved in all respects, since Danish, Swedish, German, French, Spanish, Latin, Greek, and other foreign words first began to be engrafted upon the original Saxon basis; while the Saxon words of the present vocabulary, which were at first and still are sufficient for the thoughts then and now expressed by them, have been improved in orthography and pronunciation. Nearly one third of the whole number of words which now compose the language, are Saxon. They comprise the words in common use relating to visible and sensible objects, to sensations and emotions, to families, homes, employments, wants, rela-



tions, and duties of religious, social, and practical life. Hence in our version of the Scriptures from the nature of the things referred to, most of the words are Saxon; and being largely monosyllabic, and for the most part euphonious, and by their form and usage remarkably expressive and adapted perfectly to convey the thoughts of the original text, they can not by a new English version, be replaced, to any considerable extent, by other Saxon words, or by Anglicised words engrafted from foreign tongues. Few of the ingrafts, indeed, relate to the same things and express the same thoughts as the Saxon words, and therefore the latter retain their place in common use; and before a new version can dispense with them and substitute others, a corresponding vocabulary of new and synonymous words must be adopted, preferred, and established by usage, in place of the now sufficient, expressive, and unrivalled Saxon.

The question whether a word is the synonym—has the same signification—of another, depends wholly upon the prior question, Whether as used upon the same subject, in the same connection, and in the same prosaic, poetical, learned, or colloquial style, it conveys precisely the same thought. With this question etymology can have nothing whatever to do. It is simply a question of fact as to usage. Etymology may or may not be in accordance with usage; it can not govern the use of words, any more than it can originate and determine the thoughts to be expressed. A translator to do justice to his author by his version, must convey his author's thoughts in words which as clearly express them, as the words employed by the author him-

self. He must therefore clearly conceive the thoughts in the words of the original and in the words in which he expresses them, and must therefore understand the words of the original as the author understood and used them, and must understand the words which he substitutes in the sense prescribed by usage as the author himself would do, were he to translate his own work, and express his own recorded thoughts in the words of another tongue.

Without pursuing the illustrations which these brief suggestions invite, it may suffice to notice, as bearing directly upon our theme, the manner in which inspired words of the first importance, have, in some quarters, been perverted, and in others, have passed into desuetude and oblivion: namely, by a change in men's thoughts, induced by the adoption of philosophical, metaphysical, or other speculations, theories, heresies, and errors, in derogation of the words of Scripture, and in opposition to their meaning.

Thus the words, *impute*, *imputed*, *imputation*, which, with reference to the doctrine of Justification, represent, as used in Scripture, the same thoughts in the same relations, which they represent in the Westminster Catechisms and Confessions, where they are of the most prominent and vital importance. Yet, who does not know that in some quarters, many of the churches and their teachers, whose ancestors held to those and to all the scriptural words of those formularies, and who themselves retain the Assembly's Catechism as the symbol of their faith—the use of these words is repudiated by some, and perverted by others?—their thoughts concerning justification having been changed by their

theories and speculations, from those conveyed by the concise and simple words of Scripture, to such as, in their view, explain the mode of what they suppose to be meant by justification. Some repudiate these words as implying a transfer of personal qualities and character ; some because they do not imply an infusion of righteousness, or include the act of believing, or any acts of obedience in the righteousness by which men are justified. Others, again, conceive of justification not as simply a gracious *act* on the part of God, but as a *work* wrought in those who are justified, which they confound with sanctification.

All these extraneous and speculative notions, are incompatible with the verbal Scripture doctrine of justification, "wherein God imputes the righteousness of Christ to sinners, reckons His perfect obedience and satisfaction to their account, and, pardoning their sins, accepts and accounts their persons righteous in His sight ; they cordially receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness by faith." Those, therefore, who adopt these notions, reject the thoughts conveyed by the words in question, and with them, repudiate the words ; and to be consistent, reject the thoughts conveyed by other allied or collateral words of Scripture relating to the fall of man and the imputation of guilt to his descendants, etc., and with them repudiate or pervert such other words. And in this manner, all defections, heresies, and controversies, begin with new thoughts, and a use of corresponding words, and a renunciation of their former thoughts with the words which were their medium and instrument.

So with respect to those who from the earliest in-

structions imparted to them, received and adopted false sentiments, whether concerning religion or any other subject. The words, or the perverted use of the words in which their erroneous thoughts are conceived and expressed, must be renounced or rectified, if their erroneous sentiments are ever renounced, and correct ones adopted. Men learn what they are taught, whether it be true or false, by receiving and adopting as their own, the thoughts of their teachers, in the words by which they express them. The words and thoughts adhere together. As remembered, they are identical. To uproot, dislodge, and replace them with others, is difficult, as all experience shows, in proportion as the subjects to which they relate, are deemed to be important.

How strikingly is this illustrated in the case of the Jews, as disclosed in the New Testament Scriptures, and in their history down to the present day! They had adopted false notions concerning the Person, character, offices, works, and kingdom of the Messiah, and equally concerning the teachings of the law and the prophets, the import of the Levitical institutions, and their own character and responsibilities. The defection was all but universal. They scarcely used any of the words of their own Scriptures to express the thoughts which they were inspired to convey. They made void the Law by their traditions, and by the glosses and perversions of the Rabbies. And so inveterate was their adherence to their unscriptural notions, and to the perverted use of scriptural words by which they expressed them, that no appeals to their understandings and consciences, no quotations from their sacred books, nor

any exhibitions of miraculous power, had any effect to correct their understandings and change their thoughts. They seemed not to comprehend the plainest things which were spoken to them by Christ Himself. "Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye can not hear My word;" that is, will not understand and receive My testimony; will not receive My thoughts in place of your own. The false constructions, traditions, and perversions of that period, survived the destruction of Jerusalem, and the calamities and persecutions of the Jewish people among all nations, and are cherished by them to the present day. The false and perverse uses of words in establishing and perpetuating the delusions, impostures, and heresies of the Mohammedan and the Romish systems, are no less conspicuous. Time has not cured them. No learning, philosophy, philology, or criticism, has had any effect to rectify them. The fulfillment of particular prophecies has failed to modify or correct them; for being fixed and sustained in their minds by their false notions of language and of the things which they imagine to be represented by the words of Scripture as they employ them, Mohammedans and Romanists, like the Jews who still adhere to their ancient and hereditary constructions, can no more understand a prophecy after, than before its fulfillment. Their thoughts being wrong, their words, of course, perfectly correspond to them; and until their thoughts are changed, their perverted use of words will maintain its resistless sway.

Up to the present hour, notwithstanding all that has been done in the names of philology, criticism, and the philosophy of language, the leading themes of con-

troversy concerning theological questions, and especially those which depend on the prophetic portions of the Scriptures, are treated by the vast majority, as though the construction of figurative language and of symbols was to be governed by no fixed and certain rules whatever; as though the preconceived theory of each writer was his rule; and as though each man was at perfect liberty, not only to use the words of Scripture so as to support his peculiar theory, but also at liberty to treat all the words and the persons, acts and events to which they relate, as allegorical, typical, or figurative, according to the demands of his speculation. Such assumptions and liberties are not adventured, and would not be tolerated in relation to secular subjects. They are taken and allowed only with the Holy Scriptures; and they evidently proceed on the assumptions, that language is in its nature, imperfect, changeable, and uncertain; that inspiration does not and can not transcend these defects; and that nothing more is meant by inspiration itself, than such superintendence, elevation, and suggestion, as left the fallible writers to choose out of their own vocabulary of imperfect words, such as were most in accordance with their degree of knowledge and judgment. Hence, omitting particular reference to the inconsistent doctrines and beliefs of the different religious communities and sects; the spectacle of conflicting theories and commentaries concerning the millennium, and whether it be past, or yet future, the restoration of the Jewish people, and various other subjects of prophetic revelation: insomuch that even the ablest and most learned men sit down in despair of arriving at any certainty, or content

themselves with conjectures corresponding with their preconceived theories, and with their philosophical and philological systems. That out of the millions who bear the Christian name, all do not take this course with respect to the doctrines which are essential to salvation, is owing, doubtless, to spiritual illuminations and convictions, which affect and guide their consciences, and grace which rectifies their hearts and wills ; and, in those who are not thus changed, is owing to the instructions which they receive, and the formularies of doctrine which they adopt. But with respect to other scriptural subjects than these essential doctrines, even this class equally with the sects and multitudes who reject or pervert those essential doctrines, are at a *non plus*, or in doubt and uncertainty as to what the Scriptures teach ; owing wholly, or mostly, it must be concluded, to the notions which they cherish concerning the origin and office of language, and the nature, authority, and purpose of Divine inspiration.

The bearings of the doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration on the method of teaching Theology, and on preaching, are obvious. Scriptural Theology consists in a correct understanding of the meaning of the inspired words of Scripture in the connections in which they are written, concerning the existence, character, and attributes of God, His purposes, covenants, laws, and government, the doctrines we are to believe, and the duties we are to perform. All that we can truly know or safely teach concerning these things, is expressed in those inspired words, or infallibly deducible from them ; and, therefore, they were inspired and written, and are of Divine authority and infallible.

They express God's thoughts in words spoken and inspired by Him. To teach their meaning, is the first and principal duty of the Theological instructor. To learn, meditate, remember, and cleave to their meaning as to life, is the essential duty of the student. If he fails in that, whatever else he may learn, he fails in the one thing needful—the knowledge of immutable truth, the Theology of the Bible, the WORD of God.

Definitions, catechisms, and text books, are therefore of the first necessity in teaching Scriptural Theology. They are to the student, what spelling-books and lexicons are to the school boy; helps to the meaning of the words, which express what we are to understand, believe, and do.

Accordingly the history of the Church may be confidently appealed to as showing, that in proportion as this method has been departed from, doctrinal errors and practical heresies have prevailed. All departures from this method proceed upon some false theory. Those which attempt to subject the Theology of the Bible to the rules of human science, and those which construe it by the teachings of philosophy and science falsely so called, or by any pantheistic or other theory of human wisdom, are most conspicuous and prolific of evil.

In like manner, it is the office and business of the minister, to preach *the Word*—the inspired word of God; not in the words of man's wisdom, but in the authoritative and infallible words of Scripture. All the examples and injunctions recorded in the sacred oracles, are to this effect; and for the plain reason that those words are of Divine authority, and it is the truth



as expressed in them, that the Holy Spirit makes effectual in the conviction, conversion, and salvation of men through faith. It is not only truth alone which He employs, but *the Truth*, as it is expressed in the words which He inspired, and in equivalent words of translations. Hence the Saviour's prayer: "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth." "The sword of the Spirit is the word of God.—The entrance of Thy word giveth light.—The Word of the Lord endureth forever.—And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you."

In philosophy, logic, mathematics, chemistry, and other sciences, a careful and thorough study of names, verbal definitions, axioms, rules, and principles, is indispensable. No progress whatever can be made without it. So in morals and theology. What would be thought of the man who should pretend to understand and expound the ethics of Aristotle, or those of any other author, without first possessing himself of the thoughts expressed in the root words, terms, and definitions of the system? But this preliminary process is as much more necessary in theology as the subject is more important. And we are accordingly furnished in the inspired words of Scripture, with an indubitable basis of certainty. The words, the root terms and phrases, the formulas, the commands, the affirmations, the negations, express thoughts which change not, and which no thoughts or theories of man can abrogate. Those infallible thoughts are everywhere consistent; and though the chiefest of them are interspersed in narratives, biographies, and predictions, they form a connected chain of first truths which constitute theo-

logy. To learn, understand, and think those thoughts, so that they shall as truly be the thoughts of the learner as they were by inspiration the thoughts of the writers, is to learn and be qualified to expound theology. Without such learning, no man is any better qualified to teach or preach theology, than to expound the civil code, the doctrines of philosophy, the institutes of medicine, the theorems of geometry, or the principles of any science, while ignorant of their fundamental maxims, definitions, and technical terms. Both teacher and learner may take much for granted, and hang their faith loosely on the sleeves of others; but the thoughts conveyed in the words of Scripture, will not be theirs, and "abide in them," (John 15 : 4-8,) "the ingrafted word," (James 1 : 21,) in a way to make them conscious of them as their thoughts. It is irrelevant and in vain to say that the necessity of such learning may be obviated in teachers and people by their being divinely illuminated and taught of God. For men are taught of God, not by new revelations or renewed inspirations; but only by means of the inspired words of Scripture. They are the instruments of illumination, spiritual discernment, sanctification, faith; and for the teaching of them, transferring them into the minds of hearers, so that the Spirit may employ them as instruments, God hath instituted the ministry of the word.

The Scriptures are comprehensively a testimony, to be believed and obeyed. "Set your hearts unto all the words which I *testify* among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do all the words of this law." (Deut. 32.) "The ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to *testify* the Gospel

of the grace of God." (Acts 24.) "When they had testified and preached the word of the Lord." (Acts 8.) "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be *testified* in due time." (1 Tim. 2.) "Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20.) "I came declaring unto you the testimony of God." (1 Cor. 2.) "John bare record of the word of God, and of the *testimony* of Jesus Christ." (Rev. 1 : 2.) "The *testimony* of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Rev. 19.) "Blessed are they that keep His testimonies. Concerning Thy testimonies, I have known of old that Thou hast founded them forever." (Ps. 119.)

Now it was because they testified, and steadfastly adhered to, the infallible words of Scripture, that the prophets, apostles, and martyrs were persecuted and slain. They unresistingly suffered torments and death rather than deny or swerve from the words of Scripture. "They were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." (Rev. 6.) And the like is yet to happen. "The Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. 24.) In the vision of that period, John "saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast." (Rev. 20.) "When the witnesses shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them."

The fact that under the ancient and present dispensations, hundreds and thousands of the most enlightened and holiest of men have, from the hands of the worst, suffered the greatest torments, and death itself, in testimony of their faith in the word of God, demonstrates that His word is infallible, and "liveth and abideth forever." No higher evidence could be exhibited to us that He who inspired the words of Scripture will maintain and vindicate them; and that those who receive them as His words, and believe and obey them, will adhere to them even unto death.

It is perhaps less frequently expressed than it is felt to be a disadvantage, that the Protestant denominations did not all retain a liturgical service, so far at least, as to provide for a reading of the Scriptures in the public assemblies weekly in such portions, or lessons, as to comprise the whole periodically; the congregation with Bibles in their hands, at the same time silently reading what the minister audibly pronounced, and listening at intervals to his exposition of particular passages, and definition of particular words. This method is recommended not only by its social influence and its relation to the responsibilities of the people, but still more as giving to the Inspired Word the prominence due to it in the devotions of the Church. Its propriety is obvious. It is fully sanctioned by the usage of the Jewish Church in the synagogue assemblies. It tends to fix the attention and to bring the minds of those assembled into immediate contact with all the words of God; and affords a most needful opportunity for appropriate elucidations and definitions, for the lack of which many, perhaps most of the members of congregations, gene

rally remain through life without acquiring any clear idea of the meaning of the most important words of Scripture. The defect has in part been supplied in the Scottish Church, by catechetical and expository exercises. But on this side of the water, at least, it exists without abatement, and owing perhaps to the engrossing cares and the peculiar circumstances, and the mental as well as social habits of the people, is becoming more and more apparent. The systematic reading of the Holy Scriptures, which forms so conspicuous a feature in the services of the Episcopal churches, can neither be witnessed nor contemplated without a decided conviction of its propriety and of its practical utility. It is read as the authoritative word of God, and as challenging consent and self-application on the part of the hearer—the voice of God to the people assembled to hear it.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE ENGLISH VERSION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

OUR English Bible is generally accounted the best version of the original texts that has ever been accomplished. For this, two principal reasons may be suggested. First. The English language is regarded as more copious in words, and especially of such words as are required in the translation, than any other tongue. Second. The authors of the version in common use, not only had the advantage of the labors of several earlier English translations, but they were themselves well versed in the knowledge of the original tongues, as well as of their own, and, what is not less important, were sound in doctrine and distinguished for their personal faith and holiness. No higher evidence could well exist of the ability and fidelity of their labors, than the fact that their version superseded those which preceded it, and that it has maintained its hold on the confidence and esteem of all classes and denominations of men of the Anglo-Saxon race for two hundred and fifty years. As a whole, and in respect to the essential qualities of a version, no unbiased and competent judge believes it susceptible of material improvement.

Its defects are such as are incident to every living tongue in the course of so long a period, such as arise from grammatical usage, from the obsolescence of some words, a change of meaning in the use of others, and a demand for euphemisms in the place of certain words and phrases.

The authors of that version so apprehended and received the thoughts conveyed in the original words, as to conceive them in equivalent English words in corresponding collocations. Of this there are two very sufficient evidences. First. That of their character as holy men, spiritually enlightened, taught of God. Second. The fact that the holiest men who have succeeded them, and who have most thoroughly compared their version with the originals, have, with one voice, borne testimony to the fidelity of the translation: inasmuch, that while it might be easy in some cases to suggest in place of the words adopted by the translators, other words of equal, and in some instances of superior fitness, every man competent to compare the originals with the English, may safely be challenged to point out any passage in which any important fact or doctrine is expressed, which would be materially improved by a substitution of new words. The instances in which improvement might appear to be most practicable, where any fact or doctrine is concerned, are not such as affect any denominational question between those who receive the Bible as the supreme rule of faith and practice. They are instances in which, owing probably to the prevalence of Rabbinical constructions on some points at the period of the version, the import of certain words in some connections

failed to be apprehended, while the import of the same words in other connections was perfectly expressed. Thus some Hebrew words and phrases, which, either from their connections, or from citations of them in the New Testament, appear to have been employed as official designations of the Messiah, were not in every instance so regarded, or were so rendered as to make their reference less significant and conspicuous than it might be. Of these the word translated angel is an instance; which frequently occurs as a name of office equivalent to *messenger*, and is employed interchangeably with the name Jehovah. Compare Exod. 3:2,4; 14:19, 24, 26; 20:2; Judges 2:1-3; 6:12, 22, etc., with Malachi 3:1; Acts 7:38.

The language of the present version is so generally correct and perspicuous, so well adapted to the subjects, and so faithful a counterpart of the original, as absolutely to preclude the production and reception of a different version in Anglo-Saxon words. The slight amendments above mentioned, however, with reference to obsolete words, and words of which time has changed the significance or propriety, might be permitted not only without injury, but with advantage. They would involve no greater responsibility than marginal readings and explanatory notes.

Considering the version as established by its intrinsic excellence, and by the verdict of time, a somewhat different arrangement of its contents is desirable, after the manner of Townshend's Edition, founded on Lightfoot's Chronicle; by distributing the contents into paragraphs instead of chapters; arranging them more nearly in chronological succession; disposing the poeti-



cal portions in parallelisms; and distinguishing the words recorded as having been spoken, by marks of quotation. The advantages of such an arrangement to every class of readers can hardly fail to be obvious. It would render the book more readable and more intelligible; and there can be no valid objection to it any more than to summaries of contents, marginal references, and explanatory notes, or to perfection in paper and typography.

The recent collation, under the direction of the Managers of the American Bible Society, of different editions of the English Bible, and production of a text as nearly as possible like that of the translators of 1611, deserves the emphatic and grateful commendation of the Society and of all good men. They have, under the guidance of appropriate rules, corrected the typographical and other variations from the earliest standard edition, and reproduced what, properly understood, is "the Authorized Version." In the brief and modest Report of the Committee to whom this arduous and responsible duty was referred, the necessity of the collation is sufficiently exhibited; and whether we consider the obligation imposed upon the Managers by the Constitution—which requires them to publish in English only the Authorized Version—that of 1611—or consider the established catholic, conservative, and consistent character of the Society—which commands the confidence equally of all denominations—the collation, which they have accomplished, must be acknowledged to have been an imperative and in all respects, an appropriate duty. If any thing, relating to the important service which they have ren-

dered, challenges regret, it is, that the only public and responsible organization in this hemisphere, that could with propriety and with assured confidence, undertake such a service, had not been authorized to extend the revision to words which have become obsolete, and words in place of which usage and propriety demand a substitution of appropriate and inoffensive euphemisms.

## CHAPTER XV.

## CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

ON the foregoing view of the nature and effects of Divine inspiration, the Holy Scriptures afford, both in matter and manner, ample ground of rational conviction to the skeptical and to all other classes of men, that they are from God. Evidence of their Divine authorship and authority, is manifest in every part of their contents, and in their relations to the constitution, condition, and experience of man; showing them to be the infallible word of God, inspired by Him into the minds of holy men, in language which they understood and were qualified to write.

Hence their infinite superiority to all uninspired compositions. In comparison with them, all the remains of antiquity relating to subjects in any degree similar, are puerile and foolish. The world by its wisdom, knows not God. The highest efforts and attainments of Grecian and Roman sages, exhibited only groping ignorance and imbecility, in contrast with the inspired oracles. The Apocrypha, the spurious gospels and epistles, the Koran, the writings of Mormon, and other impostors, the annals of Idolatry, the specu-

lations of Infidelity, the arrogations, prescriptions, and legends of the Romish Hierarchy, show what fallen man is able to accomplish in respect to religious doctrines, faith, and practice.

The fact that the Divine thoughts were conveyed to the intelligent consciousness of the sacred writers, by inspiration in words, is in harmony with the fact that we think, are conscious of our thoughts, remember and express them, and receive the thoughts of others, only in words. The Divine act of inspiration is in harmony with the laws of human thought and consciousness. Its effects are commensurate to the wants both of the most ignorant and the most learned of men. They are realized to men agreeably to their constitution as thinking, voluntary, and accountable creatures. They coincide with the consciousness and experience of men.

The objects which the Scriptures are designed to answer are such as to imply their verbal inspiration. They presuppose the existence of an Almighty Creator and Ruler of the world; that man is a rational and accountable creature; that there is a natural and a moral system of things, conformably to which the relations and responsibilities of creatures are adjusted; that in those relations man is subject to natural and moral laws; that he is a proper subject of Divine commands, directions, control, and discipline; and that in every particular he needs instruction as to what he should believe concerning God, and what duties are incumbent upon him: and among the objects to be answered by them are :

1. That of announcing the names and designations, the nature, perfections, prerogatives, and rights of God.

2d. That of declaring His counsels and purposes.

3d. That of showing what are the relations and duties of men towards Him and towards each other.

4th. That of prescribing the mode in which they are to worship Him.

5th. That of prohibiting all acts, feelings, and thoughts which are contrary to his Law.

6th. That of apprising men of the existence, agency, and malice of Satan.

7th. That of revealing the Redeemer, His offices and acts.

8th. That of foreshowing the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment, and the allotments of the righteous and the wicked in eternity.

Now these objects are such as to require all the precision and certainty, as well as all the authority with which the Scriptures could be invested by a verbal inspiration.

The leading truths of the Bible imply their verbal inspiration.

1. Because, being undiscoverable by man, it was necessary that they should be so communicated as to be clearly and correctly understood. But they can be so understood, so brought to his consciousness only in words. Such is undeniably the case after they are written, and such, as far as our consciousness testifies, must have been the case with those to whom they were first revealed. The fact that they are recorded

in words is evidence that the first conception of them by the writers was a conception of them in words. For they must have learned the fact that any truth unknown to them before, was revealed or inspired into their minds by their consciousness; in order to which the words which expressed and conveyed the truth, must have been inspired.

2. Because they could not select words to express a truth of which they had not the same conception and consciousness before as after the time when a selection would be necessary.

Of the leading truths of the Bible, which imply that they must have been originally conveyed in words, the following are examples.—God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.—God created the heavens and the earth.—Christ died for our sins and rose for our justification.—There will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.—It is inconceivable that the thoughts expressed by these words should have been originally conveyed to the mind without words.

The true foundation of faith is not reason or any thing conceived or imagined by men, but *the testimony of God*. But that testimony is known only in the words in which it is recorded. These words, therefore, are His words. Otherwise, we could not know that they conveyed His testimony. That which He testifies, asserts, declares, and on which faith rests, is that which He speaks intelligibly to us—His thoughts expressed, conveyed. As the testimony of a human

witness is known only as it is expressed in words, and faith in it is faith in the thoughts which are expressed and conveyed by the words, so in this case. The Scriptures accordingly everywhere teach us that the patriarchs, prophets, and others believed the verbal announcements, the verbal promises, the words of God ; not His thoughts abstractly or independently of words, not any conceptions of theirs as to what His thoughts were apart from the words in which they are written. The words which the Apostles preached were the words of faith, the words to be believed, the testimony of God. Their hearers were not left in any uncertainty—they were not to ascend to heaven above nor to descend to the depths below to ascertain what they were to believe concerning Christ: the word which expressed the testimony on which their faith was to rest, was nigh them, spoken, written. What they had to do was to hear, to hear the word of God, by which faith cometh.

The Scriptures contemplate man as a fallen, erring creature. He who gave the Scriptures by inspiration, knew perfectly the nature of man, as a fallen creature, the corruption of his heart, his evil propensities, the temptations to which he would be exposed, the antagonism of Satan, the tendencies and effects of all moral influence, all the circumstances in which he would be placed, and all the phenomena and issues of his present and future existence. He therefore inspired at sundry times, and in matter and form, just what the case required under the administration which he was to exercise over the dependent universe, and the successive generations of free human agents. More or less, or at

least, the permanent record of more or less, would not have suited this comprehensive scheme. It would not have suited that part of the scheme which relates to the free agency of men, nor the relations of that part to the intelligencies of the rest of the universe. Had the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah known all that was given by revelation and inspiration at later periods they would have been subject to an amount of moral influence, which, all the other influences affecting them, remaining as before, would have restrained, modified, and changed their outward conduct. Had those who crucified the Lord of Glory, known who He was and understood the nature of His mission, they would in like manner have been restrained. So in respect to the different orders of spiritual beings, the principalities and powers of the heavenly world, to whom it was the eternal purpose of God to make known through Jesus Christ His manifold wisdom in His administration of all things in their appointed connection with and relation to the redemption of the Church. Had those things been communicated to those spiritual beings prior to the events comprised in the work of redemption, or otherwise than as the events occurred, and as the persons and agencies of the redeemed were manifested and successive revelations were made to them, it is evident that the influence of such knowledge, and proportionably the measures of the Divine administration towards those beings, must have been quite different from what has actually taken place. By the system which was adopted, they were kept in a continual state of inquiry and solicitude to enlarge their knowledge of God and of His purposes as



disclosed by His progressive administration. They continued to be attentive spectators of events, and participated in them more or less by their own agency towards the heirs of salvation. Hence the turning point in every individual's destiny, if saved, being his conversion, when they perceive decisive evidence of that event in an individual, there is joy in heaven among the angels of God.

If the Holy Scriptures are the infallible rule of faith and life, then, of course, they contain but one category of doctrines to be believed. As there can be but one infallible rule, there can be no contrariety of doctrine within that rule. And as the doctrines to be believed are expressed in words, the words must infallibly express them. The words, therefore, are of the same authority as the doctrines which they express. All that we know of the Bible as a rule, and of the doctrines comprised in the rule, we know by the words of which the Bible consists. The words enshrine and express the doctrines. And if the doctrines owe their Divine authority and infallibility to their inspiration, so must the words, for they are inseparable, and must stand or fall together. This, in connection with the fact that the doctrines involve inscrutable and awful mysteries, far above the judgments of common-sense, and beyond the province of philosophical explanation, implies that the words which express them were inspired that they might be infallible exponents of the rule.

To adduce the judgments of common-sense, or the doctrines of speculative science and philosophy, in opposition to the words of Scripture as they are employed

to convey the inspired thoughts, is to exalt human above the Divine wisdom, and to deny both the reality and necessity of inspiration and revelation. The doctrines of Scripture are what the words of Scripture signify them to be, and they are nothing, more or less, but that. To say that the Scriptures are the rule of faith, is to say that the words of Scripture in the sense and connection in which they are used, are the rule; for the words as written are the Scriptures, and they signify, as written, all that the Scriptures signify. To set the words aside, to misconstrue them, to inflate or enervate their import, to allege the exaggerations of feeling and emotion, the demands of common-sense, the discoveries of science, the ignorance of the sacred writers, and the want of elevation in their religious consciousness; or by any other means to deny or impeach the exclusive authority of the words of Scripture, as expressing the infallible rule, is, in terms, or in effect, to say that there is no rule, that the Scriptures are in no sense infallible, that religion consists in what religionists call religious feeling, independently of verbal systems and conflicting creeds, and that all the diversified theories, philosophies, creeds, and rituals, are reconcilable and consistent with each other.

The Scriptures are the declared and authenticated testimony of the Omniscient Creator and Ruler of men, as to what is truth; and to suppose that He has given any more explicit, more advanced, or different testimony in the nature of man, in the rocks and fossils of the earth, or in any department of the physical, intellectual, or moral systems, is to suppose no less than that He has given no explicit, intelligible, reliable, and

ultimate testimony, standard, or rule whatever. For if the words of Scripture which He has caused to be written are not an intelligible and conclusive expression of His testimony, how can any of the manifestations made in any of His other works be demonstrated or conceived to be such? If the Scriptures, which are designed and adapted to instruct all classes and descriptions of men, are not intelligible, authoritative, and conclusive, who can believe that the teachings, on moral subjects, of any of the phenomena of nature, even to the few who can pretend to study or understand them, are explicit, authoritative, and final? The Scriptures are complete. Nothing is to be added to them. No condition of things, no progress of events, no new "developments," no possible exigencies of the fallen race can occur for which they are not sufficient. But who can set bounds to the discoveries of practical and the deliverances of speculative science and philosophy? And if in advance, and therefore in derogation of the Scriptures, they teach any moral or religious truths, who can tell what they are yet to disclose, and what reliance can be placed on their teachings, till the end of time arrests the progress of discovery and speculation?

There is as wide a difference between the two sources of instruction, as there is between the Creator and creatures. The one is the immediate act of God inspiring His thoughts into the minds of the sacred penmen, and causing them to be expressed in writing. The other is the self-moved agency and enterprise of fallen creatures. The one is the fountain of infinite wisdom and goodness. The other is the turbid rivulet of human intellect. And as to the instruction derived from these

sources; from one it is given in a medium common and accessible to all mankind. From the other it is attainable only by the few to whom science and philosophy are familiar.

The German critics and commentators, and their English disciples and imitators, under color of reason and philosophy, deal with the contents of the Bible, especially the historical, poetical, aphoristic, and illustrative portions of it, as though they were inserted at the discretion and on the responsibility, and as expressing only the wisdom and knowledge, such as it was, of the sacred writers. They, with more or less of reserve, allow that there are interspersed among these diversified contents, revelations from God. But even the superhuman truths which they may regard as revelations, they do not conceive of simply as they are signified by the words of the text. They seem to conceive of them as of an invisible and impalpable essence—an essence not to be condensed and enshrined in such imperfect and vulgar receptacles as words. Words may serve the purpose of hints, more or less significant of what those ethereal truths are; while reason, philosophy, and imagination must expound those hints. The contents being for the most part regarded as merely of human origin, these critics labor to discover the reason or motive which induced the writers to insert them; and whenever they seem to imply any thing miraculous, supernatural, unphilosophical, or improbable, they ascribe it to the ignorance, prejudice, superstition, or perverted imagination of the writer. They wholly mistake the matter. The reasons and motives which they assign are inadequate, and even absurd, when the

discernible relation and connection of what at successive and widely separated periods was written by Moses, the prophets, and the apostles, is discovered to be harmonious and necessary to the covenants, the course of Divine dispensations in the administration of them, and the unmistakable issues of the entire scheme of Providence and redemption.

The fact that the distinct parts of each successive book of Scripture were inspired and written on occasions which immediately called for them—the distinct instructions, exhortations, commands, promises, threatenings, to individuals, families, communities, churches; the histories, biographies, miracles, judgments, deliverances; the predictions of future events, and records of events which had been previously foretold, is in evidence: 1. That the instruction not only of those then living, but of men in analogous circumstances ever after, was intended. The inspired words, being the medium of intended moral influences, were adapted to all men on occasions and in circumstances in any degree similar to those by which they were originally called for. The words of God are, in relation to His system of moral and spiritual influences and effects upon men, like the ordinances and operations of His providence in the natural world. Both are alike appointed, and are matter of special dispensation with reference to foreseen results in His government of the world. Man's wisdom, volition, and agency, are not more absolutely excluded from all participation with His, in determining the ordinances and directing the operations of His providence, than they are from all

participation in determining the thoughts to be expressed in His word, and the effects to be produced by it. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways [of providence] higher than your ways, and My thoughts [in My word] than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater [may fulfill appointed and specific ends]: so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

2d. That the thoughts and feelings, responsibilities and duties of all men in like circumstances are similar; and therefore the words, idioms, and styles of Scripture were adapted to all mankind.

Hence the circumstance that so large a portion of the contents consists of minute details of the personal experience and history of individuals in every variety of relations, and of maxims for the regulation of life and the discrimination of character. The experience of individuals, verbally expressed, is made the means of instructing, encouraging, warning, and guiding their successors in all time. But the appropriation of it to those ends, implies the inspiration of the words. Nothing short of this could insure its perfect accuracy, give it authority, and make it a rule of conscience. The records of such experience are fraught with doctrine and precept. They exhibit causes and results.

They show what is in man's heart, disclose his motives, define his faith. They are mirrors. He who looks into them will, in one respect or another, see himself. They illustrate the Divine administration of law, of providence, and of grace, and show how all in like circumstances and of like conduct will be dealt with. Thus the faith, conduct, and experience of Abraham, Moses, the Israelites, David, and others, are, in the New Testament, referred to as examples for the instruction and admonition of their successors. The instructions which they convey, and which involve the vital connection between doctrines, precepts, faith, and practice, are expressed in the inspired words, and are therefore authoritative and safe.

These suggestions may be illustrated by a reference to those books of the Old Testament canon, which those who imagine different degrees of inspiration, and exclude from their theories the inspiration of words, regard as of limited and doubtful authority, or reject as unintelligible and useless. The book of Ecclesiastes is of this class, and may be referred to as an example. If this book, divided as in the common version, into chapters and verses, with no indication of its plan and scope as a whole, be read as a succession of desultory observations, it may appear to contain inconsistent, irrelevant, and erroneous sentiments. But let the reader be aware that it is indubitably of the canon of inspired Scriptures; that it was written by Solomon after his prolonged experience of vanity in endeavoring to derive happiness, satisfaction, and contentment from worldly possessions, pursuits, and indulgencies, and after his repentance and reformation; that the design

was to show by his experience the utter folly of seeking happiness in the ways which he had so vainly tried, to dissuade men from earthly pursuits and pleasures as means of real and lasting good, and to induce them to fear God and keep His commandments, which are exhibited as the only *true wisdom*, that is, true religion of man, with reference both to the present and the future life.

Viewed in this light, the book is composed on a regular and well digested plan. The writer lays down his premises, referring wholly or mainly to his own experience in the first six chapters; showing the vanity of all earthly conditions, occupations, and pleasures, as means of happiness to rational, dying, and immortal man. Then, as the only means of attaining the *supreme good*, he asserts and illustrates in the ensuing chapters the nature, excellence, and invariable benefits, temporal and eternal, of *wisdom*, or true religion. In the progress of this, as, indeed, to some extent, in the first division of the book, he incidentally notices the objections of cavillers, and occasionally such collateral topics as the method of instruction and reasoning of his time naturally suggested. But the scope, plan, and tendency of the piece as a whole, though obscured in some particulars by imperfect translations, can not be mistaken by an intelligent reader. Nor can such a reader be at any loss to conceive that just such a book should have been required, Divinely inspired, and written near the close of Solomon's life. The early part of his reign was distinguished by many special tokens of Divine favor. "He sat on the throne of Jehovah," as king over all Israel, in place of David, at the culminating period of the theocracy. To him was assigned



the erection of the temple. On two occasions Jehovah appeared to him, heard his requests, and blessed him. In respect to his knowledge and wisdom, the success of his affairs, and the peace, prosperity, and glory of his kingdom, he was greatly favored of God. His history and fame in these respects was widely known, and the disgrace of his defection to idolatry and worldliness was perhaps not less notorious. Degeneracy and corruption were at the same time in progress among the people, promoted, no doubt, in a large degree by his example. When he was awakened from his folly to a better state of mind, it was fit that he should be called to testify against the prevalent and fatal delusions of worldliness and pleasure, to contrast it with the nature and effects of true wisdom, and to recommend true religion as the only means of present and future happiness; and to inculcate these lessons in a way most likely to arrest attention, by citing his own extended and melancholy experience, appealing to the observations and feelings of those whom he taught, and asserting the moral government and universal providence of God, the accountability, frailty, and dependence of man, the certainty of a future judgment and retribution, and other apposite truths of revealed religion.

Here was a most ample, diversified public experiment, made by the wisest man and greatest monarch of the world, who had control of all the means of gratifying his tastes and wishes. 'He gave his heart . . . to know madness and folly . . . Whatsoever his eyes desired he kept it not from them. He withheld not his heart from any joy.' He exhausted the resources of studious ingenuity, art, and fashion; and proved them

all to be alike unsatisfying and vain. But the humiliating lessons which he had learned, and his final testimony to the transcendent excellence of true wisdom, would have been lost to others, of that and of succeeding ages, but for the composition of this book. And if the book was not verbally inspired, its teachings can have no conscience-binding authority, nor can its words be taken as the sword of the Spirit in arresting and converting those who are in danger of perishing in courses like those from which Solomon was recovered.

There are many things exhibited in the Holy Scriptures—many comprehensive and essential truths concerning social and political, invisible and spiritual conditions, relations, operations, and effects—clear and adequate conceptions of which could not be conveyed to the human mind by mere verbal statements, apart from human experience, and without such associations and contrasts of thought and diction as are pictured in personal biographies, and in allegories, parables, types, and representative symbols: concerning all which it is apparent that the truths which are taught—modified and limited as they are by the lights and shadows, what is omitted and what is expressed, in the verbal portraitures—could not be conveyed to the mind without the words which are employed in the text. And it is no less apparent that the truths intended to be conveyed by these emblematic associations could not be apprehended or conceived until the words necessary to indicate and enshrine them were conceived and understood. If, then, the *truths* were inspired into the minds of the sacred writers, the *words* also must at the

same time have been inspired. To suppose that the writers selected the words, is to suppose them to select words to express thoughts fully, of which previously they had but a half-formed conception ; words to supply some essential feature of the thoughts, or some increment of limitation.

These methods of expressing specific leading truths by associating and grouping particular thoughts in words which otherwise arranged would not express the same truths, proceed upon the ground of analogy and resemblance in such specified or manifest particulars, as are necessary to indicate the truths intended to be conveyed. The words employed in forming the picture, indicate the particular thoughts, facts, characteristics, analogies, or resemblances which, as grouped in the portraiture, convey the intended truth.

The Divine revelations and inspirations were made to the prophets, generally, with the accompaniment, or in immediate connection with, the audible utterance of words, heard and understood in the same way as the vocal utterances of one man are heard and understood by another. But in other instances, the Divine thoughts in words were as effectually conveyed to their intelligent consciousness, without any extrinsic accompaniment, by a simple inbreathing of the verbal thoughts which they were to write. In still other instances the sacred writers received the Divine communications, the thoughts, in the words which they were to write, when in the state denoted by the term *Vision*—a state, so far as the senses and the will were concerned, like that of sleep. Of this a brief notice is required.

The Hebrew words translated *vision*, where Divine

communications to the prophets as recorded in Scripture, are referred to, signify the same as the word *seeing*, in the same connections; meaning the intellectual perception and consciousness, whether when awake or asleep, of what was verbally communicated to them by inspiration, and was by them written. In this relation it is often synonymous with the terms *word* and *burden*, signifying the intellectual perception and consciousness of the thoughts verbally revealed and inspired in words. Thus: "The *vision* of Isaiah . . . which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem; [namely] . . . Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for Jehovah hath spoken." "The *vision* of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord God concerning Edom." "The *burden* of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amos did *see*." "The *burden* which Habbakuk the prophet did *see*." "The *word* that Isaiah the Son of Amos *saw* concerning Judah and Jerusalem." "The *words* of Amos . . . which he *saw* concerning Israel." "Then Thou *spakest* in *vision* to thy Holy One, and *saidst*, I have laid help upon one that is mighty."

The revelations and inspirations referred to under these terms, were evidently made in words or in equivalent signs or symbols. The thoughts conveyed to the prophets were realized to their consciousness in words, in a manner equivalent to seeing them in writing, and in some cases in a manner equivalent to hearing the words spoken, and seeing the scenes, agents, and events described. In all instances of receiving such communications, the prophets were passive. As in dreams, their power of volition was quiescent. Their power of conceiving thoughts in words, how-

ever, and of remembering them, was not impaired. Their intellectual conceptions were, perhaps, more vivid when asleep than when awake. What was conveyed to them by inspiration when asleep, and without the power of voluntarily selecting words, was realized to their consciousness and remembered in words. What occurred differed from what occurs in ordinary dreams, in this, that the thoughts of which they became conscious were conveyed to them by the Divine act of inspiration.

So, in the New Testament, a vision and seeing, in the sense above defined—perceiving and being conscious of thoughts verbally inspired in words—are of like import. Thus at the transfiguration, the disciples, though “heavy with sleep,” were conscious of what was said by Moses and Elias: but “as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, tell the *vision* to no man until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead.” Cornelius “saw in a *vision* . . . an angel of God coming in to him and *saying*, Cornelius.” Peter, in a *trance*—a state in which the senses are suspended—saw a *vision*. “There came a *voice* to him.” . . . “And the voice *spake* unto him again the second time.” . . . “He doubted what this *vision* which he had *seen* should mean.” . . . “While he thought on the *vision*, the spirit *said* unto him, Behold three men seek thee.” (Acts 10.) A *vision* appeared to Paul in the night. “There stood a man of Macedonia and prayed him, *saying*, Come over into Macedonia and help us.” (Acts 16.) “Then *spake* the Lord to Paul in the night by a *vision*, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace.” (Acts 18.)

It seems to be quite evident, from these examples,

that a prophetic vision means the reception of thoughts in words by inspiration ; and that besides the thoughts and words which are recorded as having been expressed and heard, in cases where agents or phenomena are referred to as if seen by the natural eye, the thoughts which a sight of them by that organ would suggest, were also verbally inspired.

The notion that a prophetic vision, or seeing a vision, denotes that the prophet was in a state of mental ecstasy enabling him to foresee events, and to conceive thoughts previously unknown, does not appear to have a shadow of foundation in the Scriptures. On the contrary, so far from the prophets being excited, or under any afflatus, it would seem, that in the case in question, they were either in a state of sleep, like that of men who dream, or, if awake, that their senses were suspended, and their will inactive, while the free exercise of their intellectual powers was continued.

The study of words is the study of our intellectual and moral being. The power of thinking is as the knowledge of words. Correct thinking implies an accurate knowledge of the vehicle of thought. Teaching words, is teaching thoughts, conveying intelligence, qualifying the mind to think. Hence a right knowledge of words, as the moulds and vehicles of right thoughts, is necessary to right decisions of conscience. For the decisions of conscience are convictions, feelings of the mind, which result from a comparison of our acts with the rules of right and wrong, which we have adopted. The rule or standard does not exist in the mind independently of our perception and knowledge of law, truth, and the words of truth ; for if it did, all men's consciences would invariably decide alike, where-

as those men whose standard is wrong, are as conscientious in doing wrong, as those are, in doing right, whose standard is correct. If the standard is wrong, or if no standard is perceived and known, the decisions of conscience will be wrong, or there will be no sense of right and wrong in the case. But a correct knowledge of words is requisite to the perception and knowledge of the true standard of comparison, in every given case. To meet the exigencies of men in this relation, the standard must be infallible. It must be such as the Supreme Arbiter of right and wrong alone can furnish. His words, therefore, which express the infallible standard, must be rightly understood, in order that the results of comparison, the decisions of conscience, may be according to truth.

The popular objections to some things contained in the Scriptures, as being beneath the dignity of the Divine Being, being of little, and of mere temporary importance in themselves, or being inconsistent with refined and cultivated taste, proceed partly upon the assumption that our version of the original words conveys to us in every idiomatic and other particular, exactly the same impressions which the original words conveyed to those who were contemporary with the revelations, and whose habits, manners, tastes, modes of thought, education, governments, institutions, climates, employments, were widely different from ours; and partly upon the presumption that apart from the changes effected by time in the words of our version, the objectors are competent judges not only as to what words should be used in a revelation, but as to what thoughts, in a biography of fallen men, and in narra-

tives of particular events, might be necessary and proper to be expressed. An examination of the topics, details, and words, which are objected to, made in view of the occasions and objects of particular revelations, and with a tolerable knowledge of their direct or historical connection with the great train of dispensations, covenants, institutions, promises, predictions, providences, disciplinary dealings, manifestations of righteousness, exhibitions of human character, and historical fidelity and consistency, will, to honest and unprejudiced minds, remove the imagined difficulties. But even if they could not be removed by any investigation which is possible at this distance of time, it would not follow from their being offensive to man's wisdom, and distasteful to his sentimentalism, that they were not founded on ample reasons which were apparent when they were originally written. In general, an impartial inquirer can not fail to discover that the things which he had inconsiderately regarded as trivial, had such relative bearing and importance, as to forbid their being dispensed with; and that what appeared trivial to his limited vision, was in its relations like the key-stone of an arch. Thus the mention of the flagrant sins, delinquencies, and defects of holy men, often cast a flood of light upon the most important doctrines concerning the corruption of men's hearts, and the grounds and methods of their recovery, justification, sanctification, and final deliverance. So with respect to the record of particular acts, depravities, and corruptions of wicked men. And in general, it may be said, that if fallen men in the relations which they sustain, were to be instructed concerning their own cha-



racters and abominations, so that the thoughts of their hearts should be revealed to themselves, in contrast with the character and laws of God, then the colloquial and familiar words employed by the Searcher of hearts to describe them, were of indispensable necessity.

It has been objected that the Scriptures include what is recorded as having been spoken—whether true or false in itself—by Satan, and by false prophets, and other bad, as well as by good men. The historical fact of such portions having been spoken in the words and connections in which they are recorded, is indeed thus verified, in like manner as are the statements of other historical facts. What was said by such persons is doubtless recorded in their words and their idiom; and being in effect but quotations, necessary to the progress and intelligibility of historical narratives, presents no ground of objection to the plenary verbal inspiration of all that is contained in the sacred volume. The true question respecting the inspiration and infallible authority of the Scriptures is: Whether that which is written was Divinely inspired into the minds of the writers, and is therefore the word of God? That can not be denied without disproving the genuineness and authenticity of the entire volume. It is not the object of inspiration, even with respect to those historical facts, proverbial sayings, and other matters which might be within the personal knowledge of the writers, merely to record what was true, but to authenticate by Divine authority as true, historically or otherwise, what is written. Had the insertion of such historical facts, narratives, sayings, propositions, genealogies, and other secular and familiar things, depended

at all upon the discretion of the writers, they might have extended the record indefinitely, they might have made a different selection, and, supposing them to have been honest, they might have been mistaken in some things, and written what was partly or wholly erroneous, and thereby have discredited the entire volume. As it is, the entire volume, and every part of it, is authentic and credible, because it was given by inspiration of God.

The language of Scripture, with its idioms and colloquialisms, is preëminently the language of common-sense—expressing the unsophisticated conceptions, affections, and intuitions of the common mind concerning all matters of ordinary experience. And it is so, first, because the thoughts of mankind concerning those matters are universally alike; and second, because the Scriptures were intended for the instruction of all mankind. The thoughts of all being alike, the language, the style, the words, idioms, phrases, correspond with the apprehensions, feelings, circumstances, wants, desires, hopes, fears, of the different peoples of the earth. It is the language of Nature, applied to the moral relations, wants, and experiences of man; and, therefore, is employed by the Infinite Intelligence for the instruction of man, in those relations. To suppose it to be so employed in a different manner, by different rules, or with different significations, from those common to it as used by men, would be impious and absurd: and all that so-called criticism which seeks a hidden sense, a latent meaning, a preternatural reference—which finds figures where there is nothing figurative, and mystery where the sense is plain, is but an offshoot of depraved

affections and perverted reason. Such criticism begins and ends in the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness—in the philosophy, which is science, falsely so called.

If men intellectually conceive, receive from others, are conscious of, remember, and express their thoughts in words—if a knowledge of words is an indispensable adjunct and condition of thought—if their words are commensurate with their thoughts in variety and significance—if their words perfectly express the thoughts of which they are conscious—if a knowledge of words is attainable by all who are capable of thinking, by instruction, study, hearing the speech, and reading the writings of others—then is the fact of inspiration as little chargeable with mystery, as the fact that the thoughts of men are expressed to each other by vocal utterances. The same effect is produced in the two cases: namely, the conveyance of thoughts in words into the minds of men; and unless the creature can do in this relation, what the Creator can not do, He who made man with his intellectual, organic, and voluntary powers, can speak to him in words, can endow him with the knowledge of words, and convey thoughts in words into his mind. This He has done in the language, style, and manner of those to whom He spoke so as to be understood by them, and by whom He speaks intelligibly to us.

The inspiration of the Scriptures accordingly, is that exercise of the official agency of the Holy Spirit by which thoughts in the words which perfectly expressed them, were conveyed to the minds and intelligent consciousness of the sacred penmen to be written, and

by which at the same time they were moved to write them. That agency extended alike to all the words which were so written, and determined the grammatical forms, collocations, and arrangements of them. It was not enough that the Prophets and Apostles heard the voice of Jehovah, expressing thoughts in articulate words. Moses on two occasions of forty days' continuance in the Mount, may have heard much which the Spirit did not move him to write. The conversation with Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration is not recorded. Paul, when caught up to the third heaven, heard words which he was not commissioned to write. One prediction of Enoch is recorded by the Apostle Jude. Scores of others by early and later prophets, may have been spoken, and served their purpose without being comprised in the written oracles. It belonged to the official work of the Holy Spirit in the successive dispensations, to select the thoughts and words which were to be expressed in the sacred writings, to inspire them into the minds of the writers, and to move the writers to record them in their order, connection, idiom, and style. Accordingly, the words which were written, are characterized by Zechariah as "the words which the Lord of Hosts hath sent in His Spirit by the former prophets." As the Spirit gave them utterance, the Apostles spake the words which the Spirit taught them. All that they spoke in their official character, whether in preaching or as witnesses, was inspired into their minds. The Spirit spoke in them as other holy men spake, and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. If such verbal inspiration was necessary in any instance, it was for the same

reason necessary in every instance of speaking and writing what is comprised in the Sacred Oracles. If it was necessary to infallible accuracy in writing what had been audibly communicated by Jehovah, it could not have been less necessary to infallible accuracy in biographical and historical narratives.

It needs not to be proved that He who created man and endowed him with intellect and with the power of speech, could, at pleasure, convey His thoughts into the minds of men in words selected by Him and intelligible to them. Such prerogative on His part might safely be affirmed, had no exercise of it ever been exhibited. But He has exercised it. He has spoken in the intelligible and familiar words and idioms of men, and in those words and idioms inspired His thoughts into the minds of the holy men whom He employed to write them for the instruction of the whole race. This, as is manifest from the sacred writings, and from the constitution of man, He has done in accordance with those laws of the mind by which men think, receive thoughts from others, are conscious of them, remember and express them in words which they understand.

The nature and mode of Divine revelations and inspirations are thus seen to be characterized by the same simplicity and naturalness as the other works of God. They are as perfectly suited to their end—the conveyance of thoughts from God to man—and as perfectly in harmony with the constitution and faculties of men, as is their mode of conveying their thoughts to one another. As men receive and become conscious of each other's thoughts only as they are expressed in

words, so the Divine thoughts are inspired into their minds and realized to their consciousness in words. To imagine the sacred writers to have been, like heathen priestesses, themselves inspired to conceive the Divine thoughts, and to have been subject to different degrees of inspiration, as the subject was or was not previously within their knowledge, is as absurd as to suppose men to be capable of discovering and being conscious of the thoughts of each other without their being expressed in words. And to suppose on a subject of such infinite importance as the communication of the Divine will to man as the rule of his faith and life, that the thoughts were inspired without the words is as preposterous as to imagine the sentence of a judicial tribunal in a case of life and death to be conveyed in thoughts without words. It is manifestly as inconsistent with the Divine perfections, the nature and importance of the things to be communicated, the wants of man, and every thing involved in the case, to suppose that the selection of the words of Scripture was left to the discretion of the sacred writers, as to suppose that the thoughts to be expressed were left to their discretion.

The view which has been exhibited in these pages of the nature, mode, and effect of Divine inspiration, determines on the one hand that the written Scriptures contain all the inspired truths which the Divine Wisdom required to be recorded for the infallible instruction and guidance of men—the rule of faith and life, binding on the conscience and sufficient to all the ends to be answered; and equally determines on the other hand, the absurdity and impiety of relying on Tradi-

tions, whether Patristic or Romish, as rules of faith or practice. They have not in this relation, a single characteristic of infallibility or of conscience-binding authority. They are at best but the fallible dicta of uninspired, often of unenlightened, unholy, inconsistent, erring men. In so far as they coincide with what is written in the Inspired Oracles, they are superfluous. In so far as they transcend what is written, they are corrupt and impious. They are as utterly unnecessary as they are incompetent to establish any doctrine; and whatever they teach beyond what is taught in the inspired word, is in the nature of the case without authority. They proceed upon the infidel assumptions, that the Holy Scriptures are insufficient, defective, inexplicit, unintelligible, and that fallible men are entitled to supply its defects and act the part of lawgivers to the Church, and arbiters of human destiny. But on the contrary, the words of Scripture being inspired of God, convey His infallible thoughts, and all that Infinite Wisdom deemed to be necessary, and are exclusively the rule of faith and life. Hence, throughout the Scriptures, the words of God—spoken, inspired, written—are the ground, warrant, test, and limit of saving faith and acceptable obedience. Abraham staggered not at the verbal promise of God, but believed it, and obeyed the verbal directions expressed to him. He regarded the words of God, and the oath by which he confirmed them, as alike immutable, and, therefore, like all who follow in his steps, he had that hope of acceptance and eternal life, which, as an anchor of the soul, is both sure and steadfast, being fixed in the place

within the veil, where Jesus on their account has entered. (Heb. 6.)

The distinctive terms of Scriptural theology are evidences and exponents of the divinely constituted ministry of words. According to our view, for example, the Divine names, designations, attributes, and works, when first made known, were so announced and inspired as to convey in the words the exact thoughts and meanings which they were intended to signify, and to fix and perpetuate them in the memory and speech of men. The thoughts were understood and remembered, as they were embodied, and expressed, and realized to the consciousness in the words. The words once received as the medium and vehicle of the thoughts, would be lodged in the memory to be recalled as the fixed and perfect moulds of the thoughts originally cast and transmitted in them. They could signify only the thoughts of which they had been the vehicle. To repeat and teach them to others, would be to express and convey the original thoughts. A reëxpression of them by Adam to his children, and by them to their descendants, would equally perpetuate the thoughts and words in their original completeness and precision, till ignorance, evil influences, and false teaching vitiated the conception of the thoughts, and perverted the appropriation of the words.

The same observations will apply generally to all concrete and to abstract terms, and to the historical, tropical, and antithetical appropriation of words; to the perversions of which, from their original purpose and use, so as to make them the vehicles of erroneous and vitiated thoughts, are to be ascribed all false theo-



ries of ethics and religion, and all that, in the antagonism of Satan and his messengers, of which language is the instrument.

In our view of the relation of words to thoughts, it is no ways surprising that besides the classes of particular words formerly referred to as being the exclusive vehicles of the particular thoughts which they express, all the important facts, propositions, doctrines, formularies of faith, doxologies, invocations, thanksgivings, predictions, precepts, and threatenings recorded in the Scriptures, are expressed in sentences in which the collocation of the words is such as absolutely to preclude any transposition, without marring or changing the sense, or sacrificing brevity and distinctness by circumlocutions and qualifying terms; and in general, and perhaps without exception, it may be said, that the particular words employed and collocated as they are in such sentences, can no more be exchanged for other words, than the arrangement of the original words can be changed without sacrificing the thoughts which they convey. This is alike true of the original texts according to the idioms, grammar, and usage of their respective languages, and of our own and other faithful translations. Of this, a few examples only need to be adduced. The first sentence in the Book of Genesis, which expresses a foundation fact of revealed religion, is an instance. The comprehensive, precise, and perfect thought, and each particular, shade, qualification, and relation comprised in the general thought expressed, can not be perfectly conceived by the intellect or expressed to the ear and the intelligent consciousness of the hearer or reader, in any other

Hebrew or English words, or in the same words differently collocated from those of the existing texts. Let the reader, with a competent knowledge of Hebrew and English words and idioms, make trial of this sentence. He will encounter difficulties in proportion as he comprehends the main thought of the sentence as such, the occasion and purpose of its announcement, its relation to what follows in the chapter, its relation to the time when, of the action affirmed, and to the objects of the action, the necessity of its being precisely and unequivocally expressed as a first principle, a foundation truth, the corner stone of the entire edifice of revelation, are essential facts concerning the origin of the material universe, and all dependent existences in the will and power of God, as contradistinguished from idol deities and creatures; and as the basis of the assertion and exercise of his prerogatives and rights as Lawgiver, moral and providential Ruler, and Judge of men, and as the ground of His claims to their obedience and submission. Which of the words of the sentence can he dispense with? Which can he exchange for other words that will perfectly supply the place of the originals? Which can he transpose without damage to the euphony, the required order, mould, and sequence of conception, and the completeness, compactness, and unequivocalness of the thought? Doubtless the words of the sentence might be arranged in several different ways without a violation of grammar, but in no other way than that in which they are arranged in the texts, will they convey precisely, and neither more nor less, than the same meaning.

The like observations are applicable to the following

and equally to numberless other Scripture sentences from a just consideration of which and the grounds of analogy and inference which they afford, we may confidently assert: 1st. That the words of the Hebrew and Greek texts could not be translated into other Hebrew and Greek words so as to convey precisely and exclusively the thoughts and shades of thought in the same connections and relations, and with the same limitations and implications which the existing texts convey, for these words perfectly expressed the thoughts, and were selected by the Spirit for that reason and in preference to all other words. And 2d. That the words of our English version, so far as they perfectly express the thoughts of the originals, can not be changed for other English words so as perfectly to express the same thoughts. For the translators as clearly conceived those thoughts in the words of their version as in the original words, and employed the words in which they so conceived the thoughts in preference, and to the exclusion of other words. Hence the ill success of all attempts hitherto, and the hopelessness of all future attempts to produce and give currency to new translations of the text generally, or even to particular portions of it, or more than obsolete and occasional words. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth.—The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handy work.—The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.—The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.—Thou shalt not kill.—The soul that sinneth, it shall die.—That Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that

He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, etc.—God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.—The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.—As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.—O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out.—Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen.—Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus—Who is gone into heaven and is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto Him.”

The exact meaning of words as they are used in sentences is fixed by their collocation, whereby their relation to the thought conveyed by the sentence, and their connection and relation to the other words of the sentence which in one respect or another qualify the thought, necessarily determine the precise thought intended to be expressed. Many writers accordingly have perceived that in all cases of words which have more than one meaning, or which, as used in different connections and in relation to different subjects, have different significations, the intended meaning is that which is rendered necessary by their collocations in particular instances. Thus Ernesti and Morus, as rendered by Stuart, teach that every word

must have a meaning, which is determined by usage; that the exact meaning in different instances, as fixed by usage, results necessarily from the connection and arrangement or collocation of words in sentences; and that those err who assign many meanings to a word at the same time and in the same place. This is an approximation to what the case involves. What needs to be added is, that the mind itself, in willing to express particular thoughts which it conceives in words, and in the act of thinking fixes the collocation of the words, and thereby determines what the *usage* itself must necessarily be, or exemplifies the rule by which the conception of the same precise thought by different persons necessitates the same collocation of the words.

It was apparent to the authors just referred to, as it has been, and is, to many others, that language must in itself involve the means of certainty as to its meaning. Hence the maxims of Ernesti that—"The sense of words depends on the *usus loquendi*"—"That the grammatical sense is the only true one"—and "That language can be properly interpreted only in a philological way." On the first of these, that the sense of words depends on the *usus loquendi*—he says: "This must be the case, because the sense of words is *conventional*, and regulated wholly by usage. Usage then being understood, the sense of words is of course understood." This is good as far as it goes. But there is something back of usage which controls that and makes it as uniform as the particular thoughts are which are expressed by different persons. The volition and act of the mind in thinking and in expressing

its thoughts in the words in which it conceives them, as certainly limits and fixes the meaning of the words and the ground or rule of usage, as it prescribes the verbs, nouns, and other parts of speech, and the number, case, gender, mood, tense, and other particulars which are comprised in each sentence.

Just in proportion, or degree, that men clearly conceive their thoughts, they conceive and express them in words which clearly and precisely signify and convey them. Their words are their thoughts made visible. The particular words which they use are necessary to the precise thoughts which they conceive. The writer recalls several elucidations of this which have fallen under his own observation, a particular reference to one or two of which may be more to the present purpose than a general allusion to the great authors who, in metaphysics and philosophy, have, at different periods, so effectually conveyed their thoughts in their words as thereby to rule the world. At an interview with the late Rev. Robert Hall, in 1817, pursuant to a request from Rev. Dr. Ebenezer Porter, (himself a good example of lucid thought and diction,) I asked Mr. Hall whether it was his custom to write his discourses before he preached them. He replied that he wholly eschewed that practice. I asked him how it was, then, that he could perfectly remember, and afterwards commit to writing, the very words he had used in preaching? He said that it was his habit to premeditate and fix in due order in his mind, the leading and the subordinate thoughts which he intended to express, and that he could not express those thoughts, naturally and without difficulty, by any other words than those which

he used in speaking—retaining the thoughts therefore, he had no difficulty in remembering the words, if he had occasion afterwards to write them. Such were the terms of the explanation. The reader can judge how far it would have been more complete, had another aspect of the subject engaged his attention, and had he said: “In premeditating, speaking, and writing, I naturally and of course, employ certain words, because it is in those words that I conceive the thoughts which I desire and purpose to express; and should I use other words, I should not express those thoughts.” This is really implied in the answer which he gave; as it was in the brief review and criticism, which, in the course of the interview, he expressed, of several American writers, whom he had attentively read. Of one of these, whose themes were of the highest possible interest, he said: “He fails to give his leading thoughts and topics their due relative conspicuity; he exhibits a succession of cascades, but no cataracts—his march, though onward, is in the measured monotony of a dead level.” Supposing this to be a just observation, it implies that the author in question did not, in writing, adhere to the words in which he naturally and freely first conceived his thoughts, but was restrained by his notions of rhetoric and taste, and in the act of composition labored to translate his thoughts into other, less varied and less expressive words. Of another author he said: “His thoughts are stifled and buried in an endless multitude of words.” To illustrate this, he referred to a visit he had then recently received from Dr. John M. Mason, when the conversation turned on the theological writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth

centuries. Dr. Mason extolled Dr. Owen as the prince and model; and, as the climax of his eulogy, said: "He dug deep." To which, said Mr. Hall, "I answered, that if he did, it came up muddy;" that is, confused and obscured by excess of words.

Some years after this occurrence, being at Washington while Mr. Webster was a member of the House of Representatives, I called on him one morning shortly before the regular hour of the daily session. He had just been requested to draw up an amendment to a bill then under discussion. The subject was so new, and so complicated in its relations to existing statutes, that, as I afterwards learnt, it had for several weeks baffled the efforts of the proper committee. After some desultory conversation, he desired me to take a pen and write what he had occasion to prepare before going to the House. I accordingly wrote his words and points of interpunction as he slowly dictated, till I had filled three pages of letter paper. He then asked me to read it over, which I did without vocally announcing the punctuation. He asked whether at the end of a certain clause I had placed a comma or a semicolon. On being answered, without further question, or even reading the paper himself, he said, That will do—that is right. The House being now in session, he went immediately thither, holding the paper in his hand. On entering the Hall—the debate having just commenced—he at once offered the amendment, which was read, accepted, and without opposition or the alteration of a word or point, was incorporated in the bill and passed. I afterwards repeatedly examined that composition without being able to detect an instance in



which a word could be dropped and replaced by another, or be transposed, or subjected to any modification as a part of speech, without palpably vitiating the sense—as palpably, I may say, as the results of an arithmetical calculation would be vitiated by a change or transposition of the elementary figures. Let the reader imagine the subject to have had immediate connection with the public revenue of the country; to have involved a privilege directly affecting the control of the officers of the Customs over commodities subject to impost, and to have touched on the one hand, points distinctly prominent in existing statutes, and on the other, points in which frauds, evasions, jealousies, and litigation had become familiar; and he may conceive what comprehensive and exact knowledge of existing laws, what knowledge of words and of legal terms and constructions, what knowledge of human nature as requiring, and as capable of statutory restraint, what clear conceptions of thoughts in words which perfectly expressed them, and words so collocated as unmistakably to define and fix their sense, were implied in such an impromptu effusion.

The power by which we think, and choose the subject of thought at pleasure, and by which we express our thoughts in words, recalls to memory and collocates the words in which we think. The process of thinking (where words are not immediately received by hearing or reading) includes the memory, selection, appropriation, and collocation of the requisite words. Were that process audible, we should hear the words (sounds) which, when vocally pronounced, express our thoughts to others; as, in the most rapid elocution of

an impassioned speaker his words are heard all but simultaneously with his conception of the thoughts which they express; as, also, whether sleeping or awake, we are conscious, not by succession, but simultaneously, of our thoughts and of the words which embody and contain them; and, as we remember our thoughts and words, not separately, but conjointly, as if inseparable and identical. Nor is this any more mysterious or incredible, than that we should have the power of thinking, of conceiving thoughts in an orderly succession conformably to the grammatical collocation of words in sentences, and to the literal or deflected use of words and the relations of time, case, and number; or than that we should have the power of expressing our thoughts vocally in words, however supplied, or of representing them by writing.

Every provision of man's constitution as realized to his own consciousness, and as revealed in his perception and experience of external things, implies a subsistence of which those provisions are attributes, and which is adequate to all the phenomena of thought, perception, intuition, emotion, memory, consciousness, and voluntary action; and demonstrates that he was created to be a thinking, social, and accountable agent, and was therefore endowed with the prerequisites and conditions of thought and of expression. How he exercises his faculties in thinking, and thinking in words only; how many provisions of his constitution are tasked in that exercise; how through his vocal organs he is enabled to express a variety of different sounds in articulating syllables, and in musical notes, and to utter at will any one of those sounds in distinction

from the rest, or all of them in regular succession; or what the relation is between those sounds and the thoughts which he intelligibly and perfectly expresses by them, and how they originate and indissolubly adhere together, as he is conscious of them, and as he remembers and vocally expresses them?—these and a thousand similar questions can be answered only by the omniscient and all-perfect Creator.

There is, then, in the constitution of man, a capacity or basis for the knowledge and use of language, as being essential to his social existence, and to his moral and religious character, relations, and duties. Language is a condition of his being as a thinking, voluntary agent, and has its elements in his constitution and organization. Hence the limited number of sounds and articulations of which he is capable, and the power of selecting, appropriating, and collocating those sounds in the process of thought. The power by which he thinks, is the same power by which, at the same time, he selects and collocates the sounds required as the instrument of present thoughts, and gives them the form in which he is silently conscious of them, and in which he articulates them by vocal expression. This constituent of the process of thinking is a necessary coaction of the soul. It belongs to the thinking faculty in its connection with the primitive constitutional cognitions and intuitions of the soul. Hence the instantaneousness of the coaction and of our consciousness of what we think; and the fact that invariably we are conscious of thinking in words; and the further fact, that in learning language and acquiring new thoughts, we of necessity first learn the meaning of

the words in which they are expressed vocally or in writing. We can no more receive new thoughts, from dead or living tongues, without first learning the signification of the words in which they are expressed, than we can think and be conscious of our thoughts independently of words.

Now, the source of corruption, in the selection and use of words, is in the perversion of the will and the perversion or repression of the native cognitions and beliefs; as happens in all cases in which, the will being corrupt, and the cherished standard of right and wrong being erroneous, the decisions of conscience are on the side of error. And as in all such cases language is assumed to be defective, equivocal, and uncertain; and the laws of spoken and written language are disregarded: so on the other hand, when the will is renewed and rectified, and Divine truths concerning the perfections and works of the Creator and Redeemer are presented to the awakened mind, perceptions, not predicable of the intellect alone, of Divine beauty, excellency, and glory, in those perfections and works, are discerned and realized to the consciousness. In the regeneration of men, accordingly, the soul, the subsistence which underlies intellectual perception, emotion, and consciousness, is the subject of that Divine illumination, and that effective influence of the Holy Spirit which, employing Divine truth as its only instrument, changes the heart, opens the eyes of the mind, rouses its dormant or perverted intuitions and beliefs, purifies the springs of action, subdues and rectifies the will, and thus engenders new affections, new apprehensions of truth, new tastes and

feelings, new hopes, desires, and aspirations; and on the one hand, new perceptions of the beauty, excellency, and glory of Divine realities, of holiness, of righteousness, of the moral law, of the Gospel, of the Divine perfections, of the person, the love, and all the offices and works of Christ; and on the other, new views and feelings concerning the guilt of sin and the misery and just condemnation of sinners.

It is hence obvious, that a revelation of the Divine thoughts in words is in harmony with the intellectual and moral nature of man; that the inspired words must infallibly convey the thoughts intended to be revealed, since it is truth only as revealed in Scripture which is Divinely employed in the illumination and regeneration of men; and that the true meaning of the words of Scripture must of necessity, in order to the requisite change, be rightly understood, that men may conceive and be conscious of the revealed thoughts, in the words with which they were inspired.

The process above indicated is accordingly implied, in those passages of Scripture which affirm of man in his natural state, that he is dead in trespasses and sins; that his state is that of one in darkness, blindness, under the dominion of evil, led captive by Satan; that his mind, understanding, heart, will, are darkened, blinded, corrupted, hardened, carnal, reprobate: and those passages which speak of men being turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, of the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, of their being born again of the Spirit by the Word, of their being taught of God, renewed in His image, and brought from hating to love and obey Him.

The manner of this change is in some respects described. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The eyes of their understanding being enlightened, they know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and beholding in the Inspired Word, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord.

Let those who imagine that too much stress is laid on the *verbal* inspiration of the Scriptures, consider, that in respect to creatures, words are the medium of moral influence: they are the medium of Satan's influence. By words he deceived the first parents of the race. By words he essayed to tempt the second Adam. By lying and deceitful words, enticing words of man's wisdom, words of craft and subtlety, he instigated the false philosophies, false doctrines, false worships, idolatries, witchcrafts, blasphemies, and impieties of all past times. So now. Throughout the realms of Atheism, Pantheism, Deism, Romanism, Paganism, Mohammedism, by his influence, verbal dogmas, formulas, prescriptions, define the faith, excite the zeal, and inflame the hopes and fears, the passions and emotions of the devotees. At present in the regions of Protestantism, as if to precipitate a crisis, the leading forms of speculative error and delusion seem to be ranging themselves under two principal banners; that of Monistic pantheism, and that rising exhalation which has for its denominative, the 'positive philosophy:' and as if to signalize

the subtlety and craft of Satan, these two forms are, in their principles, postulates, and reasonings, wholly antagonist to each other, while they issue alike in unqualified atheism; so that those who are revolted, by the unmasked denial of a God, in the positive philosophy, and its rejection, as unknowable and unreal, of all existences and all phenomena which are not perceptible by the senses, may be deceived and caught by the mask of perverted words and conceited faith, which slightly veils the atheism of the other. Under these banners the conflict against Truth is plainly manifest, both in some churches, and in the literary, socialistic, and humanitarian worlds, in false theories of liberty, equality, fraternity, human rights, government, faith, and morality, and in the excitements, agitations, and fanaticisms which aim to subvert the institutions and cast off the restraints both of natural and revealed religion, and to abolish those of political and social organizations.

There is a large class of critics and readers, whose religious hopes are founded in their social relations with some form of Protestantism, who hold that those important religious truths of the Bible which they conceive to have been inspired are not only extant and objects of contemplation independently of words—whether the words of the Sacred Text or others—but exempt from liability to be affected by any words. They are, in the phrase of such critics, ‘word-transcending ideas, whose golden light is not incarnated in the corruptibilities of perishing syllables,’ but is *spiritually* inspired; and that inspiration is deemed to be common to all who apprehend or receive the truths.

They are imagined to discern or conceive those truths which they deem to be essentially religious, by spiritual intuition, illumination, or inspiration, such as poets and novelists exhibit.

This conceit, of course, brings all that they suppose to be essential or peculiar to revealed religion, within their personal control. For their spiritual intuitions being subject to no verbal restraints, are simply such emotions, feelings, fancies, as arise from the state of their hearts, and may be as indefinitely various and contradictory as their notions and likes or dislikes upon other subjects. The words of Scripture may in some instances seem to express the supposed *inspired* truths as far as human language can do it, and in other instances may wholly fail; but language, whether in or out of Scripture, is no certain exponent or criterion of them. They are fancied to be independent of words. What they are, therefore, each one must determine for himself, by his own inward light. As they are not conceived in words, they can not with any certainty be verbally expressed. Though assumed to be contained in the Scriptures, the words of Scripture are in no respect essential to them: 'An inspiration,' say they, 'attaches to these truths as they are delivered in the Scriptures: but that inspiration attaches not to the words and phrases of Scripture.' How, then, it is obvious to ask, do they know, or on what ground do they believe, that the truths in question were inspired? How, indeed, do they know that the truths which they supposed to have been inspired, are contained in the Bible, if the words of the text do not express them exactly and perfectly?—and express those particular truths in distinction from all others?



The bald assumption of this theory is, that the words of the original text did not with certainty, absolute certainty, or any specific degree of certainty, express the so-called inspired truths. The reasons assigned for this assumption are: 1st. That words are variable, corruptible, evanescent — neither capable, safe, nor durable repositories of such important truths. 2d. That if the words of the text do actually contain the inspired truths, then the words are as truly inspired as the truths themselves, and *therefore*, it must be held that translators, or the words employed by translators, must be inspired, in order to their being regarded as containing and expressing the inspired truths.

Such reasoning deserves a moment's attention, only as showing on what grounds those who reject the plenary inspiration of the sacred writings, can be content to risk their hopes.

1st. It is obvious to remark, that if the words of the original Text of Scripture did not explicitly and infallibly represent and convey the inspired truths, then we can not determine from the Bible, what any of those truths were. Every man is shut up to his own inward light, spiritual inspiration, or intuition. The words of the Bible are no criterion of what was Divinely Inspired. The Bible is no Rule of faith and life to him. It can not aid him, or be of use to him. It can not but mislead him.

2d. If the words of the text do not perfectly and infallibly express those truths, then no other words can be relied on to express them. If the Bible contains certain inspired truths, and if the words written to express them by those whom the Omniscient Spirit

employed to write them, do not truly and infallibly express the truths, and for the reason that language is unstable and incompetent, then surely no words selected by other men, can so express those truths; and therefore, they can not be stated in words; and therefore, can not be contained in the Bible. One man can not tell another what those truths are. He can not in words convey his own conceptions of them. A Christian man can not tell a heathen what they are. Of course all who flatter themselves that they know what those truths are, must imagine that they know them by some kind of inspiration without words, and their faith must rest not on the Divine authority, but on their own inward personal inspiration.

3d. On this ground it is plain that translations from the original, however accurately and faithfully made, can neither have any authority, nor be of any use towards a discovery of the truths in question. The words of a translation can no more convey those truths than the words of the original. Translations are, indeed, but mockery and nonsense. Moreover, the same conclusion respecting the uncertainty and inadequacy of language, is as applicable to all other books, as to the Bible. If the words employed do not express with certainty the inspired truths which they purport to convey, then the words of a secular history, a statute law, or an oral discourse between individuals, can not be regarded as expressing what they are employed to express. That which men have always taken to be the instrument of conveying their thoughts to each other, is a mere deception. What they write, and what they say, does not, nay, can not express their

thoughts to one another. They know each other's thoughts only as they know inspired truths, by a silent internal inspiration. Their eyes, ears, and vocal organs, are alike superfluous, useless, or injurious.

4th. On the contrary, it is precisely and solely because the words, idioms, and grammatical arrangements of the original texts, perfectly and infallibly express the inspired truths contained in the Bible, that uninspired versions—translations into the equivalent words, phrases, and collocations of other tongues, express the same truths, and have authority in proportion to their fidelity. The words of the originals are an infallible standard; and such is the perfection of language as the instrument and vehicle of thought, that when the original words are so well understood that the thoughts which they convey are clearly conceived in them, and the equivalent words of the version so well understood that the same thoughts are clearly conceived in them, the latter words will as perfectly convey those thoughts to those to whom those words are vernacular, as the originals conveyed the same to those who spoke the original tongues, and were contemporary with the sacred writers. If the translator, from incompetency, or from dishonesty, does not select words which as clearly express the same thoughts as the original words, then his version is so far imperfect and erroneous. He needs more instruction and more integrity; but he no more needs inspiration to enable him to convey in the words of another tongue, the thoughts expressed in Greek and Hebrew words, than a scholar needs inspiration to enable him to express in English the thoughts conveyed in Latin by Thucydides, or than a child needs

to be inspired to understand the simplest monosyllables of the parent. The fact, therefore, that the Greek Septuagint, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Latin Vulgate, or any other version, does not in every particular express precisely the thoughts which the original words express, is no proof, either that the original words do not perfectly and infallibly express the inspired thoughts, or that Inspiration is necessary to the clear expression of those thoughts in other tongues.

All the piquant and puerile things which have been written to impeach the plenary inspiration and Divine authority of the Scriptures, on the ground of the imperfection of human language, are alike offensive for the ignorance, the sinister motives, and the hypocrisy which they betray. 'If,' says the expositor who affects to think independently of words, 'if the words of the original texts were Divinely inspired, and therefore infallibly expressed the inspired thoughts of Scripture, then, 1st, the countless translators of the Bible, and of particular books, chapters, verses, and words, must be in like manner inspired, or it will be impossible to distinguish correct from false translations; and, 2d, the translators must be inspired to distinguish between genuine and false readings of the original texts; and, 3d, every reader of translations must be inspired to select the most correct translation, and to distinguish between what is, and what is not correct in the version of his native tongue.' Now all this is as preposterous as to say that words have no meaning; that it is not their nature and office to express thoughts; and that the pretended expositor does not employ words to express his own thoughts. What he says, is equivalent

to saying that the defects of a translation, or copy, can not be detected by comparing it with the original; for when pressed by the authority of the collators of the originals, he is forced to admit that the various readings nowhere convey a different sense. They are designed, honest, or inadvertent substitutions of equivalent for original words. The copyist, having a clear conception of the inspired thoughts in the words he was to copy, occasionally wrote synonymous words in place of those in his text, and to that extent became a translator.

All theoretical and practical deviations from truth, begin and are nourished by deviations in thought and in the words in which thoughts are conceived and expressed. They are essentially violations of truth—lies. No lie is of the truth. He who thinks truth, necessarily thinks it in words which express it as perfectly as the thought exists in the mind. Thought can not transcend consciousness. We are conscious of thoughts and conceive, derive, remember, and express them, only in the words which are their exact pattern, medium, vehicle, and representative.

Those writers, therefore, who found their heresies upon false notions of language, assuming that words are signs of things, and, with respect to all but a few of the objects of sense, are inadequate, uncertain, employed figuratively without any known or conceivable reason, but at random, merely to adapt themselves to the countless variety of real and imaginary things and their qualities and relations, are either unconscious of what they do, or are deliberate violators of truth. Words are neither signs of things, nor merely *signs* of

thought. They are the matrix and vesture of thought; and hence the inspired words of Scripture, which perfectly expressed the Revealer's thoughts, are as infallible as the thoughts which they express.

Those writers also who derive their theology not from the written Scriptures, but from their own emotions, intuitions, feelings, experience, who treat the words of Scripture as words of fallible and uncertain speculation, to be construed according to fancy by an old, or by the newest system of philosophy, and make their inward experience the standard of faith, are equally violators of truth, under strong delusion to believe a lie. For their emotional experience can be no further religious and Christian than it conforms to truth as revealed in Scripture; and none of their emotions, no part of such religious experience precedes, but indubitably is the consequence of the perception or apprehension of Scripture truths. The standard, therefore, is of necessity in the truths perceived, and not in the emotions which are awakened by the perception. But those truths which are perceived and which excite corresponding religious emotions, are expressed in the inspired words of Scripture, and are, therefore, an infallible standard of faith and life. They change not, and no man can be guiltless, who adds to or takes from the words in which they were inspired.

The Scriptures, therefore, if received as at all inspired, and of Divine authority, must be received as wholly inspired, and of infallible authority as the rule of faith and life. There is no medium. If they were not wholly inspired, and equally of absolute authority, there would be no infallible standard to appeal to. If

any portion of them was uninspired and without infallible Divine authority, no conclusive evidence could be exhibited to show that every portion of them was not of that character; and no two men would be found to agree as to any particular concerning faith and life, and no one could quote them as final against any error. They were given by the Creator and Judge of men, to be an infallible rule of faith and life, and on them as such, the present welfare and eternal destiny of men depend. It being impossible from the natures and capacities of creatures, and especially fallen creatures, for them to discover or give authority to their truths, the Creator Himself inspired them into the minds of those whom He commanded to write them. He inspired them in a manner consistent with the nature, constitution, capacities, and circumstances of man, employing the vehicle which men are gifted to employ, in their intercourse with Him, and with one another; words, by which His thoughts are realized to their consciousness, as by words they become conscious of, remember, and express their own thoughts. They intelligibly express His thoughts, and for the most part, in words by which He had vocally uttered them to the Sacred Penmen, or to others. They perfectly involve His infinite authority, for they record the laws, covenants, promises, injunctions, prohibitions, announced by Him for the government of men, and according to which He administers His government and providence over men. They are sanctioned by the entire history of His providence and grace, by miracles, by predictions and their fulfillment, and by the facts and experience of human history. They contain His declarations that

they are His word, that they were inspired by Him, that His Spirit spake by the writers, that they are infallible, that their authority can not be annulled, that they endure forever, and that a cordial reception and belief of them, and obedience to them, is the condition of acceptable homage to Him, and of the attainment of the blessings of salvation and eternal life. Well, therefore, may fallen man, ignorant, corrupt, and incompetent as he is, subject to so many errors, concerning himself, and every thing around him, enthralled by so many prejudices, evil affections, and blinding influences: well may he impute to his own defect of knowledge and discernment the difficulties which a prurient and factitious criticism may suggest concerning the contents, phraseology, and arrangement of the sacred text, and view as unfounded, or as insignificant and harmless, the alleged discrepancies in letters, syllables, and words.

If the original words of the sacred text were not inspired with the thoughts which were inspired, there seems to be no alternative to the conclusion that the text is no infallible standard of what was revealed; and that our faith at best, rests, to what extent we know not, on fallible human authority. For we are nowhere expressly taught that such an influence was exerted on the minds of the writers as infallibly to secure them from error in the selection of words. The inference that they were so secured, may be deemed a necessary, and therefore, a credible inference from the conviction otherwise arrived at, that the inspired truths of Scripture as expressed in the text, are of infallible authority. But that inference is short of what the case



admits of, and of what a case of such importance would seem most emphatically to demand. Such an inference, as the ground of our confidence and faith, is accordingly seen to be superfluous and uncalled for, when we consider that but one kind and degree of inspiration is affirmed in the Scriptures themselves, and that the inspiration which they announce, is affirmed not of the men who wrote, but of that which they wrote—the words which they committed to writing. All *Scripture* is given by inspiration of God. Holy men of God spake as they were moved to speak by the Holy Ghost. The Spirit spake by the prophets. Such are the inspired attestations of the Scriptures themselves.

Moreover, let it be again observed, if language is an uncertain and inadequate medium of revelation—as the partisans of unscriptural theories and constructions are obliged to maintain—and if the inspired words do not perfectly express the thoughts intended to be revealed, then we must of necessity depend on the fallible reason, and the uncertain and conflicting vagaries and conjectures of men. But if the inspired words are as perfect a medium of the inspired and infallible thoughts which they are employed to express, as the uninspired words of men are to express the thoughts which they actually conceive in them, and of which they are conscious as being the exact measure, counterpart, and echo of their thoughts, and in which only they perfectly remember, articulate, and reveal to others what they think, then we have as solid and unfailing ground of confidence in the infallibility of the Scriptures, as we have of any thing of which we are conscious. Accordingly, the 1st article of the Westminster Confession, sec. 4, that

“The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God, the author thereof; and, therefore, it is to be received, because it is the word of God;” and, sec. 2, that the canonical books collectively, “are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life:” plainly teaches, that the words of the original texts were inspired, and were infallible as the medium of the thoughts revealed.

Accordingly the Bible claims to be, and is a perfect rule of faith and life: perfect in respect to its comprehensiveness and sufficiency for all exigencies and conditions; perfect as containing the infallible thoughts of the Divine Revealer in words which perfectly expressed those thoughts. As a rule of faith and life, it is absolutely necessary to man in all his moral relations, and all that concerns acceptable worship of the true God and the practical duties of morality and religion. That man is wholly incompetent to originate or discover such a rule, is demonstrated by the entire history and present condition of the race. To suppose him competent to discover a rule perfect and authoritative in any degree, would be, indeed, to suppose him omniscient. Even with the aid of those traditions of natural religion, which have been retained by the pagan nations, they have declined in the utmost degree from the doctrines of that system, and in no instance have they, or any single philosopher among them, succeeded in discovering any thing beyond those doctrines. The primeval revelation included all the doctrines and institutions which are, or can properly be comprised in

natural theology—the system necessary to man as such, irrespective of his apostasy, and of the means of his renovation and redemption; and also, the doctrines, ritual, and faith which were necessary to acceptable worship. Abel, Enoch, Noah, and others, embraced and obeyed both systems. The great mass of the antediluvian population, following the example of Cain, who was of the wicked one, rejected the latter of the two, and violated or perverted every dictate of the former. “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.—The earth was filled with violence—all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.—And God said, I will destroy them with the earth.”

From the rise of idolatry, which, after the deluge, was rebuked by the confusion of tongues, the Gentile nations rejecting the primitive faith, worship, and obedience as taught by Noah—a preacher and an heir of righteousness—and receiving no further oral, and no written revelations, sinned against the truths and obligations of natural religion, which were perpetuated amongst them. A sketch of their progress in corruption and wickedness is given in the first three chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. They were without the written law, by which the Jew was to be judged; but they retained the oral law of the natural system, or enough of its truths concerning the attributes of the one true God, the Creator, providential ruler, and benefactor, and concerning their own obligations, to render their wickedness inexcusable. For thus knowing God, “they glorified Him not as God, neither were

thankful ; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." Those truths of the natural system which, being unmistakably reëchoed by their constitutional beliefs, were a law to them, they "held in unrighteousness;" and being not like the Jews under the written law, perished under the law which they violated. So far as the Gentiles did in obedience to the natural law, things which are also enjoined in the written Scriptures, they were a law to themselves. (Rom. 2 : 14.) To that extent they acted as if the natural law—the truths of which met to the same extent a corresponding response from their constitutional feelings and beliefs—were written in their hearts ; their consciences consequently bearing witness ; their thoughts or judgments, on comparing the truths so perceived and attested with their actions—accused, or else excused the acts in question.

So far, then, as relates to the pagan world, it is evident that man has shown himself to be wholly incompetent to invent or discover a rule of acceptable faith and worship, or of the practical virtues and duties of life.

The same is no less true of all the sects of Philosophers who have access to the written Scriptures, but who reject, or labor to supersede them. That this is true of the partisans of what is comprehensively termed the *German philosophy*, no man who believes the Scriptures, will for a moment doubt. The leading

systems indicated by that general term, are the Theistic, the idealistic, and the pantheistic—of which the latter is held in several forms, differing more or less from each other. The Theist assumes the existence of an eternal God, the Creator, existing independently of His works of creation, and holds more or less the truths of natural Theology, but rejects the Scriptures and all supernatural revelations. The Idealist ignores an external revelation equally with all other external phenomena. The Pantheist imagines that the universe is God, or that nature and man are God, in so far as He is manifested as having life and consciousness. But neither of them teaches any system or rule of faith, worship, or practical obedience; much less any thing in advance of the Scriptures as a rule, or any thing susceptible of practical observance. On the contrary, they are but visionary subtleties and delusions, for it is notorious and of necessity that the Idealist acts and speaks as though he fully believed in the existence of matter; and the Pantheist, in equal antagonism to his philosophy, as though he was a conscious person, distinct from God.

The philosophers of these and other unscriptural systems discuss the subject of the soul, under the name of intellect, as though in its nature it comprised nothing but what is indicated by that term. Of the intellect accordingly they predicate perception, cogitation, and consciousness, as if those phenomena described and exhausted the powers of the perceiving, thinking, and conscious agent; or as if the soul was nothing beyond what those phenomena exhibit it to be. In their efforts at abstraction they lose sight of the substance from

which they abstract, and dissever the intellect and its phenomena from the agent to which they belong ; as a man would describe a watch by its exterior phenomena, without taking cognizance of the main spring, and its relations to all the interior machinery.

The Scriptures contemplate and address man as a being, an agent, endowed not only with the faculties and powers of perceiving, thinking, and being conscious, but with those which make him a moral and responsible agent, accountable to God as his creator, lawgiver, and benefactor ; subject to His law and to His providence, susceptible of sensations from external objects, and of emotions from mental perceptions ; capable of progress indefinitely in the exercise of his powers as an agent, incapable of thinking, feeling, or acting, in opposition to the laws of his own constitution, and destined to exist forever, as a distinct, acting, conscious, accountable being.

These philosophers, on the other hand, contemplate man, either as a phenomenon with relations only to external nature and his fellow-creatures ; as a phenomenon which includes in itself—in each individual's conscious perceptions—all that is meant by external things of whatever nature ; or as a part, in common with all material and other phenomena of nature, of what they call God. In so far as they are not governed by a practical faith in opposition to their speculative theories, they are but a step, if so much, from saying, there is no God. Their systems followed out, subvert and exclude all religion and all morality. Mystified and led astray by false and perverted thoughts, they employ words perversely to express what scarce one in a mil-

lion of the human race can comprehend. And yet, by the craft of Satan working in the imaginations and passions of men, the dogmas which they profess to educe from their theories, are widely received, not only by the ignorant and reckless, but even by educated men, ministers and others who profess to hold in reverence the oracles of the omniscient and infallible Teacher. It is between these theories, as the loftiest, acutest, and best of mere human speculations, or these and more vulgar and palpable forms of infidelity, on the one hand, and the word of God as the rule of faith and life on the other, that men are to choose, for a guide in the present and the endless future life.

On the questions of right and wrong, morality and religion, faith and worship, life and death, man needs, in the most absolute sense, an infallible standard. It is not enough that he believes particular statements, propositions, or doctrines, and believes them to be in some sense revealed. To meet the exigencies of his case, they must be infallibly true, and if denied, it must be practicable to show that they are of that character, and that they are expressly revealed and of Divine authority. When the awakened and anxious inquirer arrives at this conviction, nothing short of express verbal inspiration will afford him the satisfaction and confidence which he requires. Then the specious and delusive assumption on which many a system of false ethics, false logic, and false theology are founded, will be renounced: the assumption namely, that language being of human device, is an imperfect vehicle of revelation, and therefore being capable of various and diverse meanings, must be construed according to the

reason, judgment, feelings, or theory of the expositor. Nor will the view taken by the soundest of those who believe the Scriptures to be inspired and infallible, fully satisfy the inquirer: namely that—waiving the question of mode in the transmission of Divine truths and of verbally representing them in writing, so far, at least, as concerns the choice of words—*such an influence was exerted on the minds of the sacred penmen, as to secure them from error.* For how could they be perfectly secured from error, unless the very words they were to write were inspired into their minds, and unless those words perfectly expressed the thoughts which were intended to be revealed? With these conditions, indeed, the claim of infallibility is irresistible. But without them there is room for uncertainty. Something is felt to be wanting. For in the nature of the case, it was as indispensable that the writers should be infallibly secured against error in their verbal expression of the truths revealed, as that they should be so secured against error in their perception of the truths themselves. If it be possible to imagine an influence which would accomplish this, without inspiring the words with the thoughts, into the minds of the sacred writers in styles and idioms corresponding to their habits of thought and expression, it is nevertheless incomprehensible and unsatisfactory. Nor does such a supposition commend itself as relieving any difficulty. For beyond a question, it would be as easy to such a Divine influence to inspire the proper words, as it would be infallibly to secure the writers against error in selecting them.

The necessity of a Divine Revelation, and all the



ends to be answered by the Scriptures as we have them, authorize us to conclude that had God dispensed with human agency altogether in committing them to writing, and written every chapter and verse with His own hand, as He did the Ten Commandments, He would have written them on the same occasions, for the immediate local use of the same parties, and therefore in the same styles and idioms, that He inspired and caused them to be written by the Prophets and Apostles. They were, in the view of His wisdom, necessary in successive portions on those diverse occasions, and therefore at divers times He inspired them into the minds of the sacred writers. To answer their immediate purpose, and ultimately their purpose to the common mind of the whole race, they were necessary in the styles and idioms in which He inspired them, and therefore had He written the whole of them, He would have written them in those styles and idioms. Accordingly, to the very large extent that they are a verbal record of what He spoke, they show that He spoke them at the times and in the words, styles, and idioms, in which He inspired and caused them to be written. The necessity and reasonableness of this view of the matter is apparent from the consideration that the Scriptures as written, to be the infallible rule of faith and life, must be the authoritative word of God expressed in styles and idioms which men were qualified to understand. A Divine Revelation to fulfill the purpose of the Scriptures, must of course be made in human language, and in the language of those to whom successive portions were addressed, and, for the same reason, in the words, styles, and idioms with

which they were familiar. Whether written by the instrumentality of men, or immediately by the finger of God, could therefore make no difference in these respects. And to have specifically the moral influence and effect which the Scriptures, as the infallible rule of faith and life, must be assumed to be designed to have, they must, however written, be, in respect to language, style, and every other particular, precisely what they are. For, as they actually are, they are perfectly adapted to have precisely that kind and degree of moral influence and effect which they were designed to have upon the minds of those who read them—those who read them carelessly and at random, those who read, study, and meditate them seriously and devoutly, those who have the least and those who have higher and the highest advantages of literary education, those in every stage and condition of life—in prosperity and adversity, in health and sickness, joy and sorrow, solitude and society, under salutary external influences and the contrary. Of every individual of all classes of men from age to age, who read and hear the Scriptures, the moral character and destiny are to be determined by their conformity or non-conformity to what the Scriptures teach and enjoin. The moral quality of their dispositions and their actions, their faith and life, is to be decided by comparison with the written word. Now if, as they are actually written, they are perfectly adapted to produce such results upon all classes and conditions of men, under an omniscient administration of perfect rectitude, then the ends to be answered require them to be precisely as they are in respect to language, style, and idiom, as well as with respect to

the thoughts which they convey. Had they been different from what they are in any of those particulars, it is apparent that they would not have been adapted and adequate to produce all the influences and effects, under all circumstances, upon all classes and conditions of men, that they, as actually written, are designed and fitted to produce.

Had they been written in other than the identical words of the original text; had the words been collocated differently; had the styles and idioms been different; had they been otherwise composed than in accordance with the ordinary laws and usage of human language; had they excluded the figurative use of words; had any portion of them been omitted, or any thing additional been included in them, it is an obvious and just conclusion, that they would not on the various descriptions of readers, or on any reader, have produced, perfectly and exclusively, the same effects, which, as actually written, they are designed and adapted to produce.

The force of these considerations is not inferior to that of any other considerations touching the matter or manner of a Divine Revelation and infallible rule of faith and life; nor are they less vital to what most obviously pertains to free agency in men, to moral law and government, moral influence, moral actions, and moral responsibilities and retributions. Whoever considers the normal condition of the soul of every individual of the fallen race—its capacities and susceptibilities, its necessities and propensities, its relations and its obligations; and considers the necessary tendency and effect on the sentiments, feelings, and emotions,

perceptions, volitions, and acts, of every instrument of moral influence, of every thought, every word, every sensation, of reflection, consciousness, and memory, of error, prejudice, and passion, of ignorance, bad example, and bad habit, perverseness of will, obstinacy, and recklessness—will perceive the force of these considerations as clearly as he can perceive the effects of good and bad moral influences in forming the actual characters of different men as they advance in life. And if the Scriptures are the occasions and instruments of moral influence, and the tests of moral character and desert, then it is necessary to suppose that the infinite wisdom and rectitude of the Creator and moral Governor of men, prescribed in every respect, and every jot and tittle, the matter and manner of what they contain. If they are His rule of governing and judging men, His perfections require that they should be what they are—His word, given by His inspiration—an infallible rule of faith and life.

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It is the author's purpose, should there appear to be occasion, to add to this another volume, to contain further elucidations of the leading and of some subordinate topics, and a notice of the recent work of Professor Lee, of Dublin, on *The Inspiration of Holy Scripture*.



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